RDI RURAL DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

The Provision of Additional Library Services to Rural Southwestern Manitoba

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THE PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL LIBRARY SERVICES TO RURAL SOUTHWESTERN MANITOBA

by

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PREFACE

Studies in the United States indicate that library usage in rural areas with sparse populations is no different than usage in larger centres (Vavrek 1990). However, areas with few people cannot provide rural services on their local tax base, and may not be heard politically in centres of power.

With the present trend toward shifting responsibility for rural development to communities and away from senior governments, the need for information increases in rural areas. Vavrek (1990) states the "Clients belonging to community organizations have information needs greater than those not participating in community activities and are more dependent on the library to satisfy those needs." Many rural library clients view the library as "highly important to the well-being" of their community. In short, there never has been a greater need for the empowerment of rural people through provision of information.

Manitoba's rural library system has developed irregularly and opportunistically over several decades. There are many areas and communities that do not have library services, and others with limited access to limited resources. A perceived need by rural residents, and a desire to improve the system by government personnel, led to this study. Although not all encompassing, this effort does investigate the rural library system and needs in southwestern Manitoba, where a high percentage of unserved residents reside.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Director,
Rural Development Institute

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

Tax supported public libraries offering free access to all citizens have been the standard service model throughout the English speaking world since the passage of the British Public Libraries Act of 1848. Similar provision was made in the Manitoba Municipal Act of 1893. A century later, the province has 48.5 percent of its population outside of Winnipeg still unserved. This is the lowest level of service in Canada, and ways of improving service are being studied by the Manitoba Public Libraries Advisory Board which advises the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship.

This study looks specifically at the southwestern region of the province which, for no apparent reason, has the unique situation of a large number of served municipalities interspersed with unserved municipalities. The results of questionnaire surveys in a number of unserved areas are compared to statistics for served municipalities and conclusions are drawn.

A History of Library Service in Manitoba

Although a library was established in the Red River Settlement as early as 1846, the first public library under the Municipal Act was opened in Winnipeg in 1895. The Department of Agriculture established a travelling library service for the rural population in 1918. This was transferred to the Department of Education in 1923 and later to the University of Manitoba. It is currently operated by the Public Library Services Branch of the Ministry of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship.

The first public library outside of Winnipeg was opened at Souris in 1924. Other early libraries include Neepawa (1937), Brandon (1946) and Dauphin (1948). The Libraries Act of 1925 allowed two or more municipalities to join forces to establish a library but this had little effect outside of Winnipeg until the Souris library reached an agreement with the RM of Glenwood in 1958. The following year the Boissevain and Morton Regional, Lakeland Regional, Southwestern Regional and Virden-Elkhorn libraries were established (Figures 1 & 2).

A change in the Libraries Act in 1960 allowed municipalities to join existing systems. Glenboro (1964) and Pilot Mound (1965) joined the Lakeland system. The Western Manitoba Library based in Brandon and Carberry was established in 1967. Neepawa joined this system the following year and Glenboro switched affiliation in 1979 making it the largest system in the southwest. Portage La Prairie established a city library in 1969 which was joined by the RM of Victoria, with a branch library at Holland, in 1984 (Figure 2).

The mid 1970s saw further growth. Prairie Crocus Regional Library at Rivers, and the Rapid City library opened in 1975. The following year Minnedosa and Reston formed libraries and the Southwestern Regional Library added new members. Bren Del Win Regional Library was established in 1979. The early 1980s saw a continuation of growth, with Argyle public library opening in 1982, while Langford (1982), South Cyprus (1983) and Cornwallis (1984) joined the Western Regional Library. The latest change to the system has been the addition of the RM of Archie to the Virden-Elkhorn system in 1990, with a branch library to be opened there.

Figure 1

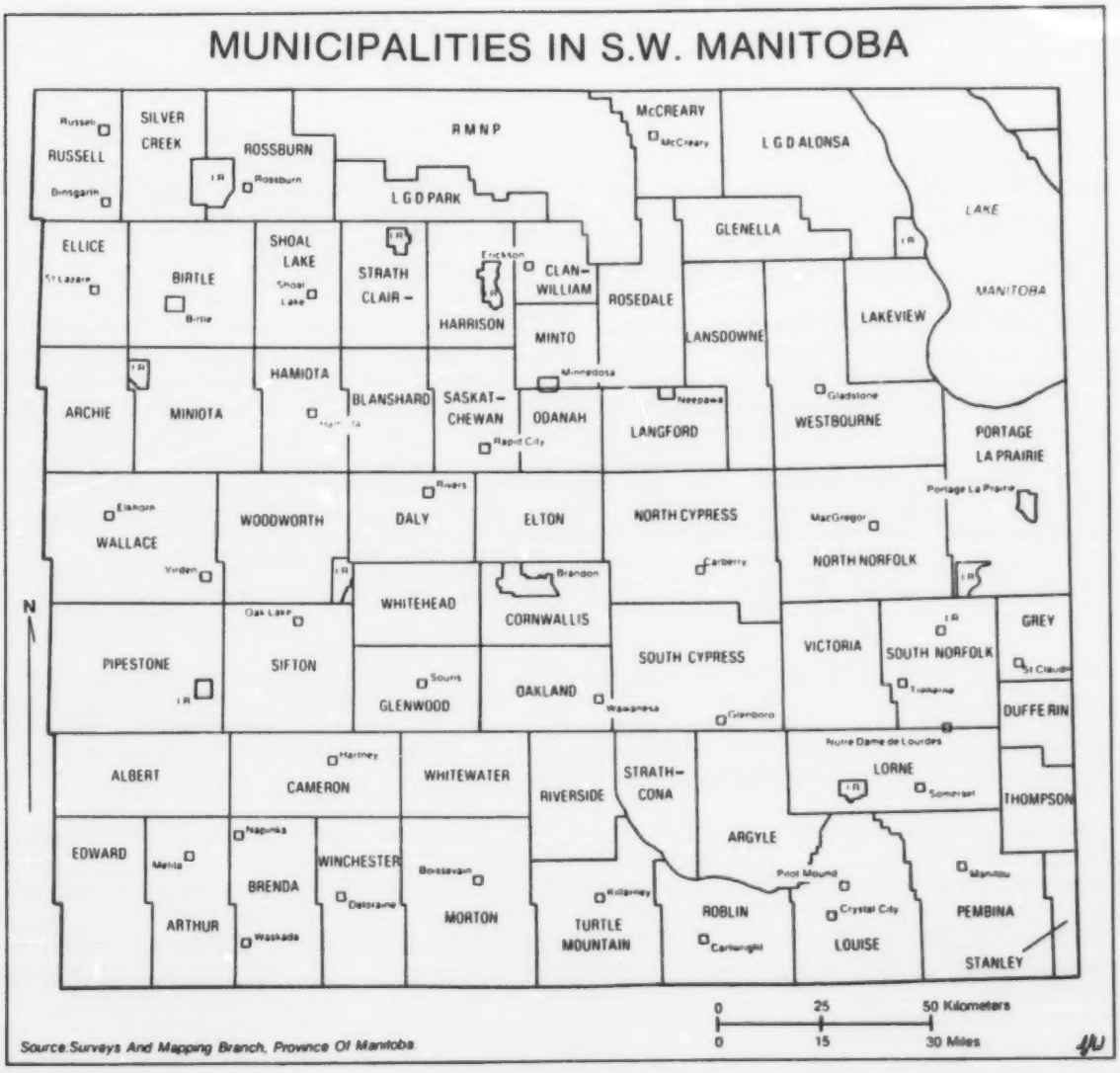
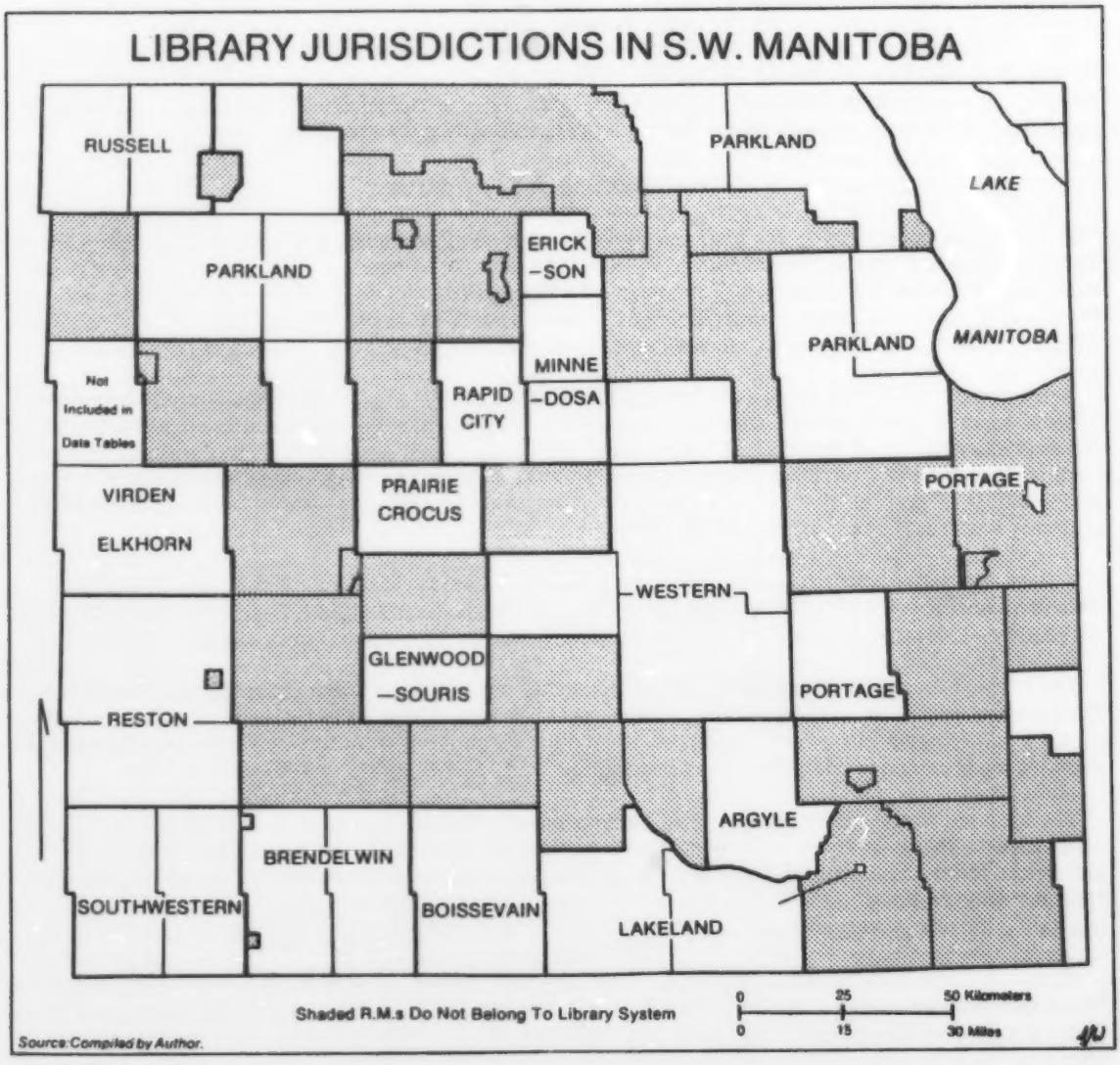

MUNICIPALITIES IN S.W. MANITOBA
RUSSELL
SILVER CREEK
ROSSBURN
RMNP
McCREARY
L G D ALONSA
L G D PARK
GLENELLA
LAKE MANITOBA
ELLICE
BIRTLE
SHOAL LAKE
STRATH CLAIR
HARRISON
CLAN-WILLIAM
MINTO
ROSEDALE
LANSDOWNE
LAKEVIEW
ARCHIE
MINIOTA
HAMIOTA
BLANSHARD
SASKAT-CHEWAN
ODANAH
LANGFORD
WESTBOURNE
PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE
WALLACE
WOODWORTH
DALY
ELTON
NORTH CYPRESS
NORTH NORFOLK
WHITEHEAD
CORNWALLIS
PIPESTONE
SIFTON
GLENWOOD
OAKLAND
SOUTH CYPRESS
VICTORIA
SOUTH NORFOLK
GREY
DUFFERIN
ALBERT
CAMERON
WHITEWATER
RIVERSIDE
STRATH-CONA
LORNE
THOMPSON
EDWARD
ARTHUR
BRENDA
WINCHESTER
MORTON
TURTLE MOUNTAIN
ARGYLE
ROBLIN
LOUISE
PEMBINA
STANLEY
N
0 25 50 Kilometers
0 15 30 Miles
Source:Surveys And Mapping Branch, Province Of Manitoba

Figure 2


LIBRARY JURISDICTIONS IN S.W. MANITOBA
RUSSELL
PARKLAND
PARKLAND
LAKE
ERICK
-SON
PARKLAND
MANITOBA
MINNE
-DOSA
RAPID
CITY
Not
Included in
Data Tables
VIRDEN
ELKHORN
PRAIRIE
CROCUS
PORTAGE
WESTERN
GLENWOOD
-SOURIS
PORTAGE
RESTON
ARGYLE
BRENDELWIN
SOUTHWESTERN
BOISSEVAIN
LAKELAND
Shaded R.M.s Do Not Belong To Library System
0
25
50 Kilometers
0
15
30 Miles
Source: Compiled by Author.

The Currently Unserved Populations

Libraries are financed jointly by municipal taxation and provincial grants. The unorganized territories of northern Manitoba, therefore, represent the largest spatial area of unserved population. However, the total population of this area in 1987 was only 75,369. Because of their federal jurisdiction, the Indian Reservations in the province represent a second population which is largely unserved (see I.R., Figure 1). Although Bibliotheques have been established at Notre Dame de Lourdes, Somerset, Ste. Anne and St. Claude, and some libraries have collections of books in French, the Ministry estimates that approximately 20,000 francophones also remain unserved.

Finally, there are municipalities which have not established a library or joined an existing system (Figure 3). The 1987 population of those areas was 242,498. In terms of population, this is the largest unserved group and also the group which could most easily become served by passage of a municipal by-law. Areas located more than 25 km from a public library are of particular concern to the Province.

The Service Alternatives

A discussion paper "Books By Mail and Travelling Library Programs: An Evaluation" (Public Library, 1989) was prepared by the Public Library Services Branch of the Ministry of Culture in September 1989. It discusses three service alternatives. First, in an effort to provide services to the rural areas of Manitoba, the Province, through the Public Library Services Branch, operates a books by mail service. Currently, the Ministry estimates that this service meets the needs of about 2.9 percent of the unserved population.

Second, the travelling library service provides a set of books to an interested organization in a community. The collection is rotated every six months. The original idea was to generate interest in a permanent library, but in practice the Ministry feels that it has tended to be a poor substitute instead. The number of travelling libraries has declined from 58 in 1980 to 25 in 1989. The collections are aging and it is estimated that they serve only 0.85 percent of the total unserved population (Public Library, 1989). A travelling library is currently based at Hartney in the study area (Figure 1).

A third alternative is for residents of unserved areas to become non-resident borrowers at existing libraries. This involves the payment of a fee to the library in question and in most cases considerable travel to access the facility. This service is used by 2.9 percent of the unserved population (Public Library, 1989).

The Public Library Services Branch survey referred to above, suggests that about 10 percent of unserved residents use more than one of the above alternatives to fulfill their needs. Collectively, the three alternatives create a participation rate of only 6 percent of the population. Data from serviced areas suggests that this signifies the presence of a large unserved population.

The ideal situation is establishment of libraries in unserved areas. As suggested in the historical outline, a municipality may establish a public library to serve the residents of that municipality. In this case the library is financed jointly by the municipality and the province, with the province also providing training and some special resources through the Public Library Services Branch. There are currently eleven such libraries (including the one at Argyle) in the study area.

More commonly, two or more municipalities cooperate to establish a "Regional Library". Usually a Rural Municipality contributes to a library in a market town in return for free borrowing privileges for its residents. The same provincial assistance is available to the regional library. This is a highly successful program with memberships averaging 43.8 percent of all residents in the member municipalities (Table 1). An expansion of this system is the linking of two or more libraries into a single system with contributions from two or more municipalities. Statistics from southwestern Manitoba suggest that while this may improve the quality of the collection which can be accessed, it has not increased the proportion of the population participating. There are 24 regional systems in the province including 12 in the study area (Table 1).

Figure 3

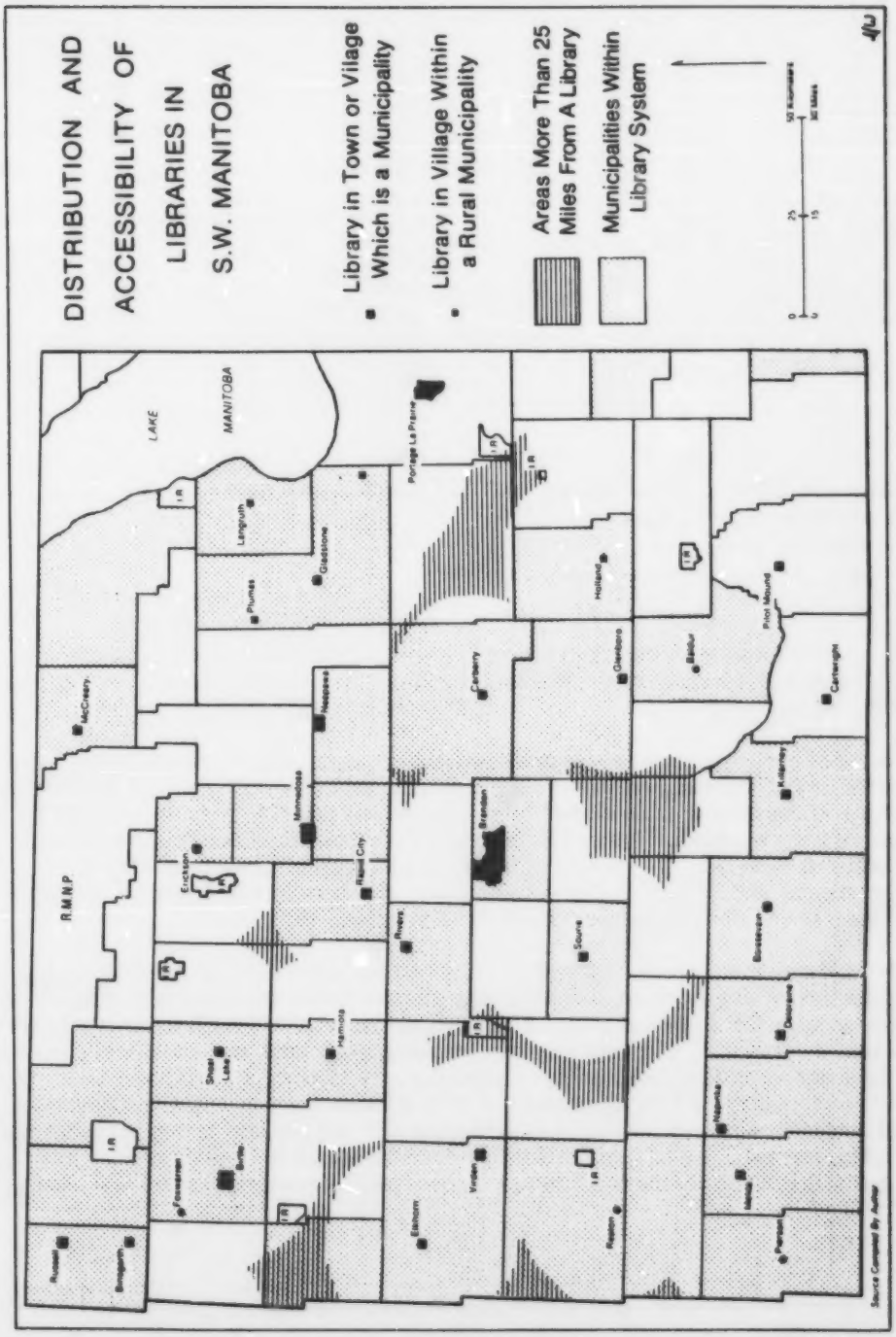

DISTRIBUTION AND ACCESSIBILITY OF LIBRARIES IN S.W. MANITOBA
Library in Town or Vilage Which is a Municipality
Library in Village Within a Rural Municipality
Areas More Than 25 Miles From A Library
Municipalities Within Library System
LAKE
MANITOBA
R.M.N.P.
Russell
Binscarth
Shoal Lake
Birtle
Foxwarren
Erickson
McCreary
Minnedosa
Neepawa
Rapid City
Hamiota
Rivers
Virden
Elkhorn
Reston
Langruth
Plumas
Gladstone
Portage La Prairie
Carberry
Brandon
Souris
Holland
Glenboro
Baldur
Pilot Mound
Carberry
Killarney
Boissevain
Deloraine
Napinka
Melita
Pierson

Table 1. Data on existing libraries in southwestern Manitoba, 1987

System	No. municipalities	No. libraries	Population[1]	No. Members	% Pop	Circulation per capita
Western	8	4	47,267	16,303	34	6.31
Lakeland	5	3	5,913	2,502	42	7.32
Southwestern	3	3	2,881	1,384	46	10.26
Virden*[2]	3	2	5,493	2,996	55	8.32
Portage	2	2	14,517	5,324	37	8.02
Minnedosa	3	1	3,901	2,364	61	9.95
Bren Del Win	3	1	2,948	1,236	42	5.33
Reston	2	1	2,695	900	33	6.75
Boissevain	2	1	2,599	962	37	13.65
Glenwood	2	1	2,572	1,010	39	7.32
Pra. Crocus	2	1	2,432	993	41	5.17
Rapid City	2	1	1,220	714	59	7.74
Argyle	1	1	1,420	100	7	1.15
Totals	38	22	x̄ 3,098	x̄ 2,820	x̄ 43.8	x̄ 7.40

1 Mean 3,098 (excluding cities)
2 * excludes 1990 changes
Source: "Manitoba Public Library Statistics 1987"

The study area for this survey includes the municipalities to the south and west of the RM of Westbourne (Figure 1). Municipalities which currently belong to a library system within the study area and the unserviced areas are interspersed (Figures 2 & 3). A number of areas lie beyond 25 km from a library (Figure 3).

Data on the 12 regional libraries in the study area was extracted from "Manitoba Public Library Statistics 1987, (Manitoba 1987)", and a questionnaire was sent to each library to obtain information about non-resident memberships. Because data are collected by the libraries by postal address, information on some Rural Municipalities is not complete. Figure 4 shows approximate locations of non-resident borrowers of libraries other than that at Brandon. The number of non-resident members varies from none to 30. Most live in adjacent municipalities. Figure 5 shows non-resident membership at Brandon. Brandon's much larger drawing area is obvious both in numbers and distance travelled.

In order to learn more about unserved areas, a number were selected for study using a telephone questionnaire survey. The 1989 List of Electors for each municipality selected was used as a source of names. Households were identified as those people at the same address with the same last name. Non-resident voters were eliminated. Beginning at a randomly selected point, every tenth household was chosen for contact, giving a total sample in each municipality of approximately 10 percent of all households. If a telephone number was not available, or contact could not be made after three attempts, a substitution of the next household on the list was made. Refusals to participate were not replaced as they represent a disinterest in the topic. This method provided a spatial distribution of the sample (by polling station) which corresponds with the spatial distribution of the population, a factor of particular importance in Rural Municipalities.

Figure 4

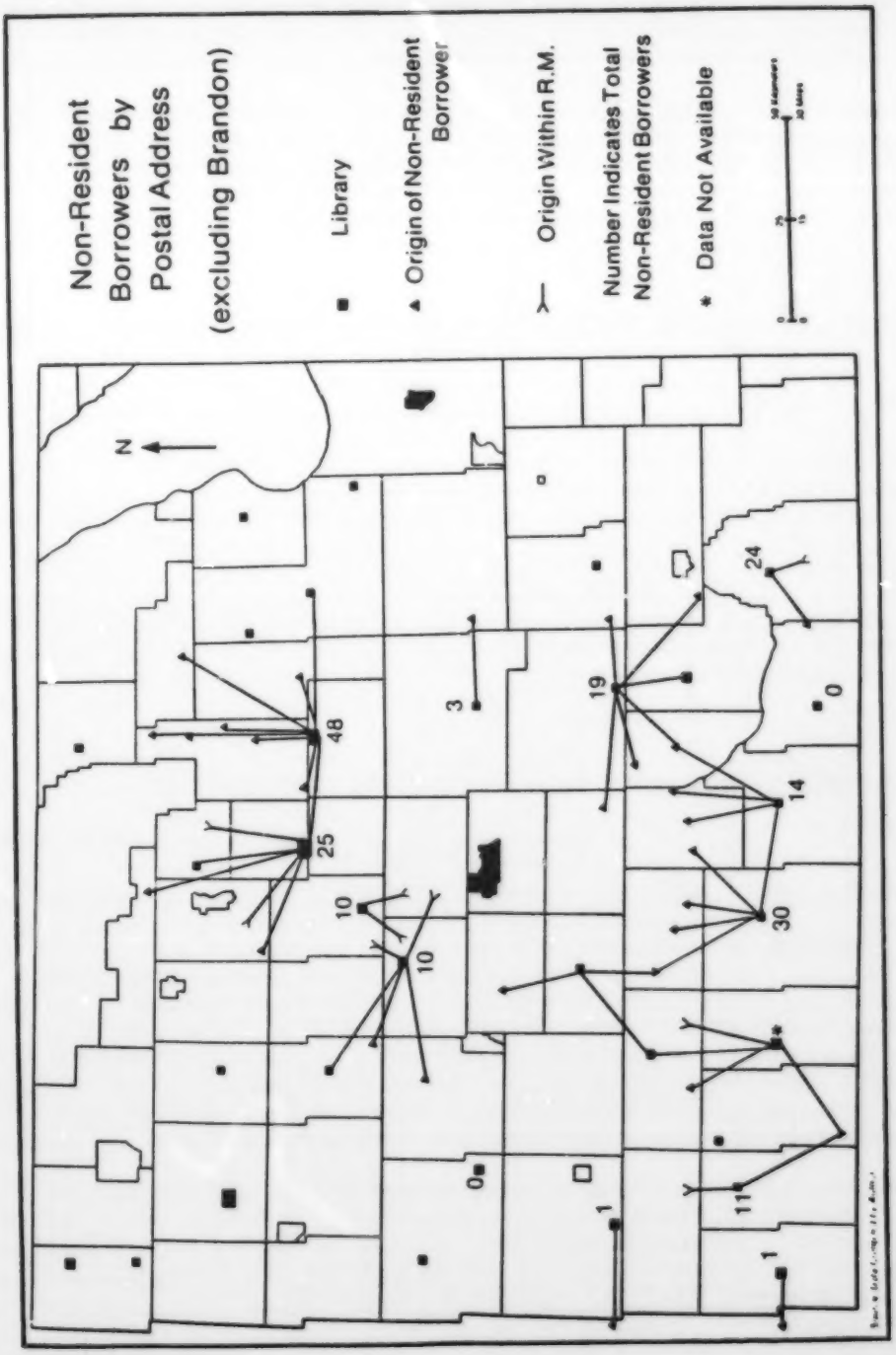
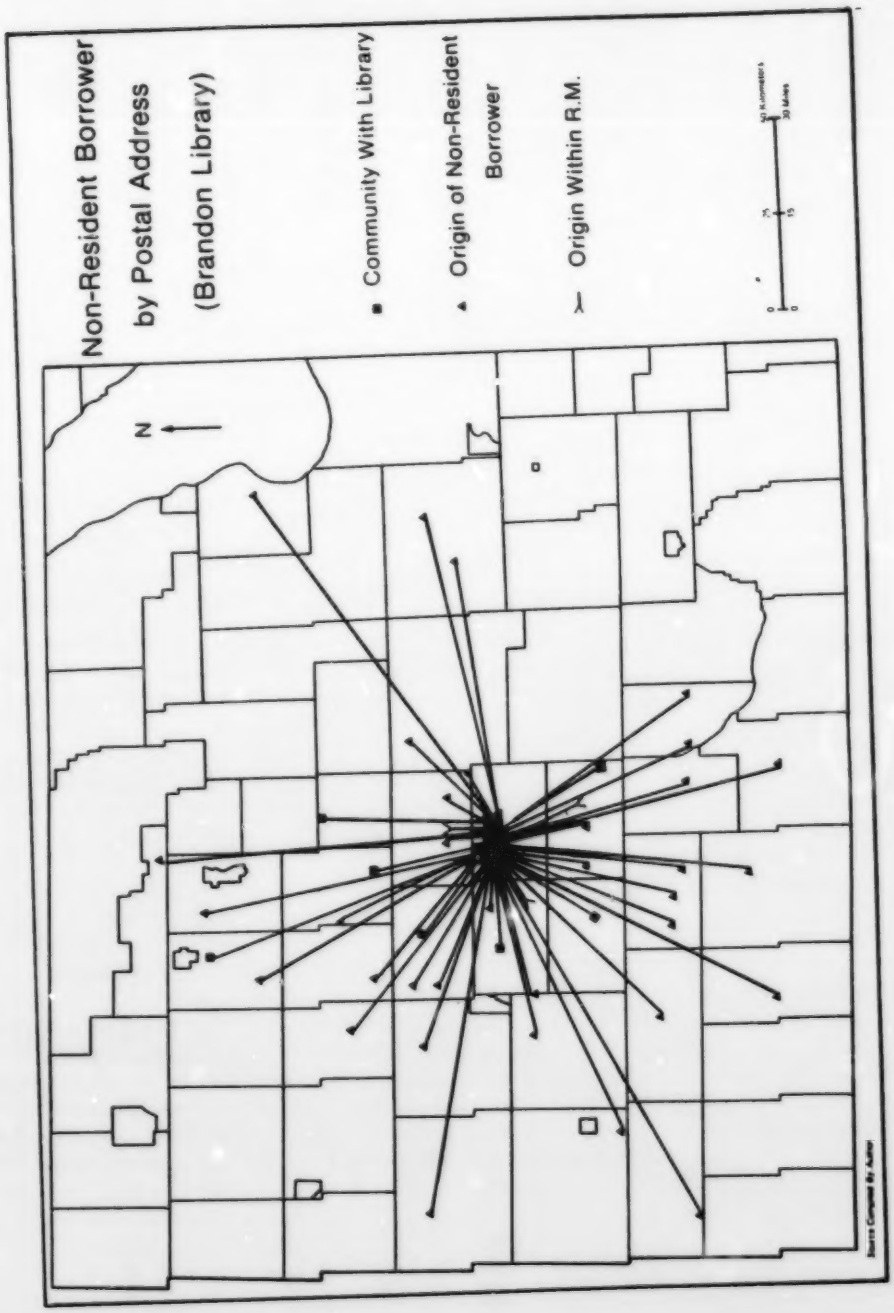

Non-Resident Borrowers by Postal Address (excluding Brandon)
Library
Origin of Non-Resident Borrower
Origin Within R.M.
Number Indicates Total Non-Resident Borrowers
Data Not Available
N
48
25
10
10
3
0
1
19
24
0
14
30
11
1

Figure 5


Non-Resident Borrower
by Postal Address
(Brandon Library)
N
Community With Library
Origin of Non-Resident
Borrower
Origin Within R.M.

The Winnipeg Public Library Market Research Survey (Jones and Beckman, 1985) and a major rural library report from the United States (Vavrek 1990 a and 1990b) provided evidence that demographic factors may play a part in the demand for libraries. Specifically, it was found that females tend to be higher users than males, and that increases in level of education, income and professional employment all increase library use. People between the ages of 25 and 55 are more frequent users than younger or older adults. Single people and small families are more mobile than larger families, and this may be a use factor if libraries are located at a distance.

Data on sex of respondent, family size, age of family members, and occupation were solicited in the questionnaire. Income was not requested, although Census figures for each municipality were examined. The survey did not attempt to equally represent any of these characteristics in the choice of respondents. Information sought included reading habits, awareness of and use of the books by mail service and travelling library service, non- resident library membership, desire for a local library and some service requests. Results of the questionnaire survey are presented by municipality.

PUBLIC OPINION OF LIBRARY SERVICE IN UNSERVED AREAS

Six presently unserved areas were selected for analysis of library needs in southwestern Manitoba: 1) the Rural Municipality of Oakland and the Village of Wawanesa, 2) the Rural Municipality of Cameron and the Town of Hartney, 3) the Rural Municipality of Sifton and the Town of Oak Lake, 4) the Rural Municipality of Woodworth, 5) the Rural Municipality of Whitewater, and 6) the Rural Municipality of North Norfolk and the Village of MacGregor (Figure 1). These areas contain the major portion of unserved library populations more than 25 km from the nearest library (Figure 3).

Information was collected and is presented in a highly structured manner. Data are presented for each area so that those interested only in responses in a given jurisdiction get a complete picture in one section. Data for each area, in turn, are presented in an identical format. This allows readers who are interested in a particular aspect of the study (e.g. readership information) to compare identical tables among areas. Finally, data for all areas are combined to represent the entire region.

The Rural Municipality of Oakland and Village of Wawanesa

Description of the Area

The Rural Municipality of Oakland is a rectangular area of 558 km^2 with an average population density of 1.9 persons/km^2. The northern boundary is approximately 11 km south of the City of Brandon along Highway 10 while the southern boundary is 33 km north of Boissevain. The eastern boundary is 25 km west of Glenboro along Highway 2 and the western boundary is 13 km east of Souris. The above mentioned communities have the closest libraries to Oakland, leaving about 40 percent of the RM (the southeast portion) beyond the provincial target of 25 km to the nearest library (Figure 3). Small settlements within the RM include Carroll, Nesbitt, and Brandon Hills. The 1986 Census population was 1,039, an increase of 3.6 percent from 1981. The total number of adults was 685 with 20 persons listed as not being Canadian citizens. The 1989 list of electors lists 630 resident voters, suggesting that the municipal population has possibly declined slightly since 1986. The Census lists 325 households, while the electoral list has 311 households.

The Village of Wawanesa is located 2 km north of Hwy 2 and 28 km west of Glenboro, in the southeast corner of the RM of Oakland. The village is beyond the provincial target of being within 25 km of a public library (the closest library is at Glenboro). The 1986 Census population was 502, an increase of 2 percent from 1981. The total number of adults was 395, all of whom were Canadian citizens. The 1989 list of electors lists 365 resident voters, suggesting that the municipal population has possibly declined slightly. However, the Census lists 200 households, while the electoral list has 224 households. The RM population is lower then that supporting any existing library in the southwest, but association with Wawanesa would create a large enough population to consider provision of library services.

The Survey Population

The trend in Manitoba has been for Rural Municipalities and the urban units within their boundaries to share a library facility. Thus, the study of the RM of Oakland was linked to a study of the Village of Wawanesa. Because people have to travel to use a library, it was decided that a spatial distribution of the questionnaires which reflected the spatial distribution of the population in Oakland would be most important. This was achieved by using the 1989 voters list which is a spatial list of the population (by polling station). A total of 50 questionnaire responses was desired from the combined area. The total number of resident households was determined and every tenth household was selected until 29 were contacted in Oakland and 21 in Wawanesa. This represented 9.4 percent of all households. Two respondents in Oakland and three in Wawanesa said they had no interest and refused to participate further. A total of 45 useable surveys are available in the two jurisdictions.

The survey did not attempt to proportionately represent Census demographic characteristics. Although women make up only 48 percent of the adult population of Oakland, the survey respondents consisted of 20 females (75 percent) and 7 males which may have biasd results towards library users (Table 2). Similar, but less skewed results occurred in Wawanesa, where 53 percent of adult residents, but 66 percent of respondents were females. Overall, 71 percent of respondents were female, but they constitute only 50 percent of the population.

Respondents were asked if there was a more avid reader in the house. This information was needed to estimate household readership, rather than that of just one individual. In the RM of Oakland 13 of the females and 3 of the males answered yes, and in Wawanesa, 3 of each sex answered yes. In total, therefore, 16 women and 6 men suggested presence of a more avid reader in the house, suggesting that sex may not have created a strong bias within the sample.

Census data on age distribution and that from the survey indicates that the survey under-represented the most avid readership group (25 - 44 years) (Table 2). In Oakland, both younger and older age categories were over-represented. In Wawanesa, however, the distribution of respondents by age closely paralleled that in the 1986 Census. The high percentage of older people in Wawanesa may effect both their desire to read and mobility.

Twenty-six percent of survey households in Oakland had children between the ages of 5 and 18 years. This compares favourably with a Census figure of 33 percent. In Wawanesa, 17 percent of households had children, compared with 19 percent in the Census. Survey households in both areas were slightly smaller than the Census averages, potentially indicating a slightly more mobile group. The number of 2 and 3 person households are over-represented, and the number of 4+ person households under-represented in the data.

Education and income characteristics of respondents were not solicited in the survey. The Census shows Wawanesa to have one of the highest mean income levels in the southwest which may have the effect of increasing the number of avid readers in the community. Occupation was discussed (Table 3). In the RM of Oakland, farmers, housewives, professional people and retired persons were most frequent respondents. In Wawanesa, professional people and retirees accounted for 80 percent of the sample. When combined, representation was evenly distributed among the four major groups.

The Demand for Library Services

Individuals who do not have access to a library in their own community have a number of alternatives. As part of this survey the libraries in the area were contacted to determine how many residents of Oakland and Wawanesa are paying members of other libraries (Figures 4 and 5). Although complete figures were not available, it would appear that there are some Oakland residents among Souris' 25 non-resident borrowers. There are also an undetermined number of Oakland residents with Brandon addresses among the 72 non-resident borrowers at that library. In addition there are 3 families from Carroll and 3 from Nesbitt using Brandon library. Brandon library reported 8 non-resident members from Wawanesa, and the Glenboro library reported one. There were none at Boissevain. There were no non-resident members from Oakland at either

Glenboro or Boissevain. Non-resident members consitute 4.5% of all households which suggests considerable demand.

Among the 27 survey respondents in Oakland, 5 held memberships at Brandon and 1 at Souris. This result projects to 22 percent of households buying library services. Given that 40 percent of the RM is more than 25 km from either library, this suggests that there is considerable demand for access to a library. Similar results occurred in the Wawanesa survey as one respondent held a membership in Brandon and two in Winnipeg. Fifteen did not belong to a library.

All Oakland residents not using a library knew where the closest one was located. Seventeen listed Brandon and four listed Souris. Wawanesa residents surveyed listed Brandon 7 times, Glenboro 6 times, and Souris and Shilo one each.

Table 2. Survey and Census comparison of sex of adults, age, and household size for the RM of Oakland and the Village of Wawanesa*

Characteristic	RM Oakland				Village of Wawanesa				Total			
	Survey		Census		Survey		Census		Survey		Census	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Sex												
Female	20	75	329	48	12	66	209	53	32	71	538	50
Male	7	25	356	52	6	34	186	47	13	29	542	50
Total	27	100	685	100	18	100	395	100	45	100	1080	100
Age												
18 - 24 yrs	5	20	48	7	2	9	43	11	7	16	91	8
25 - 44 yrs	7	24	322	47	6	34	119	30	13	29	441	41
45+ yrs	15	56	315	46	10	57	233	59	25	55	548	51
Total	27	100	685	100	18	100	395	100	45	100	1080	100
Household size (no. persons)												
1	2	7	28	9	1	7	60	30	3	7	88	17
2	11	41	93	30	7	41	70	35	18	40	163	32
3	8	30	62	20	6	30	20	10	14	31	82	16
4+	6	22	126	41	4	22	50	25	10	22	176	35
Total	27	100	309	100	18	100	200	100	45	100	509	100

*Residents who did not wish to complete the survey are not included.

Table 3. Occupations of survey respondents in the RM of Oakland and the Village of Wawanesa

Occupation	RM Oakland		Wawanesa		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Farmer	6	22	2	11	8	18
Housewife	7	26	2	11	9	20
Professional	6	22	7	39	13	29
Student	1	4	0	0	1	2
Retired	4	15	7	39	11	24
Other	3	11	0	0	3	7
Total	27	100	18	100	45	100

Three other alternatives to a permanent library were discussed with respondents. Nine respondents in Oakland and five in Wawanesa were aware of the Provincial book by mail service, and three in each jurisdiction had used it. These responses constitute 11 percent and 16 percent of the respective populations, and are considerably higher than the 2.9 percent projected for the Province (Public Library, 1989).

The second alternative, the Travelling Library Program, has a centre in Hartney. Three respondents in Oakland were aware of this, but none were in Wawanesa.

The third alternative assessed was that of using or developing a private book collection. Retail purchase or borrowing of books was most frequently listed in both Oakland and Wawanesa (Table 4). Trading, using school libraries and ordering from book clubs by mail were used commonly, and about equally by residents.

Table 4. Private options used by residents of the RM of Oakland and the Village of Wawanesa to obtain reading materials

Option	Oakland		Wawanesa		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Buy or borrow	14	52	7	39	21	47
Trade	3	11	5	28	8	18
University/school library	4	15	2	11	6	13
Book club/mail	2	7	4	22	6	13
No response	4	15	0	0	4	9
Total	27	100	18	100	45	100

Two questions were asked in an effort to get information on potential use and location of a library in the Oakland-Wawanesa region. The dispersed nature of the population was evident in responses to the question "if the library was in the nearest town would you use it?". Among Oakland respondents five people said yes if in Brandon, three if in Souris, six if in Wawanesa and one if in Carroll or Nesbitt. Eleven negative responses occurred, so the 59 percent positive response suggests that a library would be used if instituted. Wawanesa residents were even more positive as 72 percent said they would use a library if it was located in Wawanesa (n=12) or Glenboro (n=1). Only five negative responses were received.

To the second question, "where would you like to see a library located?", area residents listed Wawanesa or Brandon (Table 5). Since Brandon has a regional library, we accept a Brandon response as either adequately serving the area, or that they wish to join the Brandon library on a permanent basis. It also reflects the strong ties with Brandon for employment and shopping. Location in Wawanesa would serve the presently unserviced southeastern part of the area as well as the less mobile senior population of the town. The best overall service to the area would be provided by establishing a branch of the Brandon library in Wawanesa for residents who live more than 25 km from Brandon, but by joining the Brandon system, all residents also would have access to the city library.

Table 5. Preferred location for a library to serve the RM of Oakland and the Village of Wawanesa

Preferred location	RM Oakland		Wawanesa		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Wawanesa	6	29	14	100	20	57
Brandon	9	43	0	0	9	26
Nesbitt	4	19	0	0	4	11
Carroll	2	9	0	0	2	6
Total	21	100	14	100	35	100

Willingness to pay an additional $7 per person in taxes to provide free library service received 10 positive and 17 negative responses in Oakland, and 14 positive and 4 negative responses in Wawanesa. If the 36 percent of positive responses from Oakland were to join a library, use would approximate that of present rural libraries. The high positive numbers in Wawanesa (78 percent), or the combined positive responses (54 percent) suggest active participation in the region.

Library Services Desired

Readership characteristics of respondents were assessed by a number of questions. Respondents in Oakland often read either no books, or one book each month (74 percent combined) (Table 6). Most of the remaining 26 percent read either two or three books per month. Fewer interviewees in Wawanesa were non-readers (22 percent), but most read one or two books per month. Combined, about one-third of all respondents did not read books, one-third read one book per month, and one-third read two or more books per month.

Sixteen respondents in Oakland and six in Wawanesa reported that another member of the household was a more avid reader. All such readers read more than two books per month. Using respondent and more avid reader data as a base for projecting borrowing, use would be 1276 books per month for RM residents, and 723 books per month by Wawanesa citizens. This results in circulation/capita per year rates of 14.7 and 17.3 books respectively. These figures are higher than those for most existing libraries (Table 1).

If a library was located where people had listed a preference, visitations would vary widely among respondents (Table 7). Wawanesa residents would use the library more frequently than rural residents, and, overall, about 25 percent would visit weekly, monthly or occasionally. When pro-rated to the population, about 56 rural and 78 village persons would use the library per week. Rural users would borrow about five books per visit and village users about two books per visit.

Infrequent access would not serve the needs of the people (Table 7). Rather, being open all day, during afternoons and during evenings are preferred times. It appears that afternoon and evening use would allow greatest accessibility for most citizens.

Readers in both jurisdictions expressed an almost equal interest in fiction and non-fiction (Table 7). Only about 10 percent of the respondents were most interested in magazines. Since the number of responses far exceeds the number of people interviewed, many indicated more then one type of material.

The highest ranking special service requested was for an information centre function within the library. This reveals a need for a place to access essential government programs and policies, and was important to both rural and village residents. Other services were listed commonly, and no great variations were evident between jurisdictions. This suggests a need for a variety of services, but does not allow priority definition among potential services.

The lack of interest in second language publications is a reflection of ethnic origins. Within the RM of Oakland 91 percent of residents are anglophones, and within the Village of Wawanesa, 96 percent are anglophones. Age structures varied greatly between jurisdictions, but were not reflected in service preferences. For example, there are 95 children age 5-9 years in Oakland and only 35 in Wawanesa. In contrast, there are 90 people more than 65 years of age in Oakland and 135 in Wawanesa.

Table 6. Number of books read per month by survey respondents and family members who are avid readers in the RM of Oakland and the Village of Wawanesa

Jurisdiction	No. books read/month	Respondents		Family		Total persons		Total books	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Oakland	0	10	37	0	0	10	23	0	0
	1	10	37	0	0	10	23	10	9
	2	4	15	3	19	7	16	14	13
	3	2	7	2	12	4	10	12	11
	4	0	0	3	19	3	7	12	11
	5	0	0	3	19	3	7	15	13
	6+	1	4	5	31	6	14	48	43
	Total	27	100	16	100	43	100	111	100
Wawanesa	0	4	22	0	0	4	17	0	0
	1	6	33	0	0	6	25	6	9
	2	4	22	0	0	4	17	8	12
	3	1	6	2	33	3	13	9	13
	4	1	6	1	17	2	7	8	12
	5	0	0	1	17	1	4	5	7
	6+	2	11	2	33	4	17	32	47
	Total	18	100	6	100	24	100	68	100
Combined areas	0	14	31	0	0	14	21	0	0
	1	16	35	0	0	16	24	16	9
	2	8	18	3	14	11	17	22	12
	3	3	7	4	18	7	10	21	12
	4	1	2	4	18	5	7	20	11
	5	0	0	4	18	4	6	20	11
	6+	3	7	7	31	10	15	80	45
	Total	45	100	22	100	67	100	179	100

Table 7. Readership characteristics of respondents in the RM of Oakland and the Village of Wawanesa

Characteristic	Oakland		Wawanesa		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Freq. library use						
Weekly	4	16	5	29	9	21
Bi-weekly	2	8	3	18	5	12
Monthly	5	20	5	29	10	24
Occasionally	9	36	3	18	12	29
Never	5	20	1	6	6	14
Total	25	100	17	100	42	100
Preferred hours operation						
All day	10	39	4	24	14	33
Afternoons	5	19	5	29	10	23
Evenings	9	34	5	29	14	33
Weekends	1	4	1	6	2	4
One day/week	1	4	2	12	3	7
Total	26	100	17	100	43	100
Materials read[1]						
Fiction	19	70	11	61	30	67
Non-fiction	22	82	11	61	33	73
Magazines	3	11	4	22	7	16
Total no. respondents	27		18		45	
Special services[1]						
Information centre[2]	15	56	15	83	30	67
Authors/speakers	9	33	9	50	18	40
Adult literacy program	8	30	7	41	15	33
Sound recordings	8	30	8	44	16	36
Children's books	7	26	7	41	14	31
Storytime	5	19	6	33	11	24
Large print books	4	15	6	33	10	22
Second language books	1	4	1	6	2	4
Total no. respondents	27		18		45	

1 Multiple answers allowed
2 Distribution of government materials, etc.

The Rural Municipality of Cameron and the Town of Hartney

Description of the Area

The Rural Municipality of Cameron is a rectangular area of 743 km^2 with an average population density of 0.8 persons/km^2 (Figure 1). The small settlements of the RM are Grande-Clairiere, Argue, Lauder and Underhill. The incorporated Town of Hartney is located in the north central part of the RM, approximately 25 km southwest of Souris.

The closest libraries to the RM are located at Souris, Deloraine and Napinka (Figure 1). About 23 percent of the RM, running from the NW corner to the SE corner (Figure 3), is beyond the Provincial target of 25 km to the nearest library. Hartney is on the edge of the 25 km limit for Souris library and has a travelling book collection in the municipal offices (Figure 3).

The 1986 population of Cameron was 613, down 10.2 percent from 1981. The total number of adults was 405, all of whom were Canadian citizens. The 1989 list of electors contains 394 resident voters, suggesting that the municipal population has declined slightly. However, the Census lists 185 households, and the electoral list 198. The 1986 Census population of Hartney was 523, up 6.7 percent from 1981. The total number of adults was 408, 35 of which were not Canadian citizens. The 1989 list of electors has 389 resident voters, suggesting that the municipal population has risen slightly. However, the Census lists 315 households, and the electoral list only 248. Both municipalities have less than half the population of the smallest regional library in southwestern Manitoba. When amalgamated, however, they are only 100 persons short of that figure (Table 1).

The Survey Population

The study of the RM of Cameron was linked to a study of the Town of Hartney. A total of 45 questionnaires were administered in the area. They were apportioned according to the relative populations of the two municipalities with the Cameron survey consisting of 20 questionnaires, and the Hartney survey 25.

Because people have to travel to use a library, it was decided that a spatial distribution of the RM questionnaires which reflected the spatial distribution of the population would be most appropriate. This was achieved by using the 1989 voters list which is a spatial list of the population (by polling station). The total number of resident households (persons with same last name at same address) was calculated (n=198) and beginning at a random point in the voters list, every tenth household was selected in Cameron, until 20 were contacted. This represented 10 percent of all households. Two respondents said they had no interest and refused to participate further. In Hartney, a 9.9 percent sample of households resulted in 13 refusals and 18 completed forms. Five of those refusing to answer gave advanced age as the reason for disinterest.

Although demographic characteristics may affect demand for libraries, the survey did not attempt to represent any specific characteristic. It is, therefore, important to comment briefly on them with respect to the 1986 Census data. Although women make up only 48 percent of the adult population of Cameron, the survey respondents consisted of 15 females and 3 males. Fifty-five percent of the residents of Hartney are women, but only 43 percent of the respondents. When combined, women constitute two-thirds of respondents and half of the residents. This may bias results slightly toward readers (Table 8).

Respondents were asked if there was a more avid reader in the home in an effort to determine household readership patterns. In Cameron, five females and one male said yes. In Hartney, three of the females and two of the males answered yes. This suggests that sex of respondents has not provided a strong bias in the answers.

Census data on age distribution for the study area, and that from the survey indicates that the survey approximated the population in both the RM of Cameron and the Town of Hartney (Table 8). Age bias should be marginal in the sample. It should be noted that Hartney has a large elderly population. This may affect both their desire to read and their mobility, as it did their willingness to participate in this survey. Half of the survey households in Cameron had children between the age of 5 and 18. This over-represents the Census figure of 32 percent. Households also were larger than expected. In Hartney, only 15 percent of households had children, but this approximates the Census figure of 19 percent (a reflection of the older age structure). Household size was slightly smaller than expected, but when combined, household size in the sample did not deviate greatly from Census data (Table 8).

Table 8. Survey and Census comparison of sex and age of adults, and household size for the RM of Cameron and the Town of Hartney

Characteristic	RM Cameron				Town of Hartney				Total			
	Survey		Census		Survey		Census		Survey		Census	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Sex												
Female	15	83	194	48	6	43	224	55	21	66	418	51
Male	3	17	211	52	8	57	184	45	11	34	395	49
Total	18	100	405	100	14	100	408	100	32	100	813	100
Age												
18 - 24 yrs.	3	17	41	10	1	8	16	4	4	13	57	7
25 - 44 yrs.	7	38	170	42	3	21	123	30	10	31	293	36
45+ yrs.	8	45	194	48	10	71	269	66	18	56	463	56
Total	18	100	405	100	14	100	408	100	32	100	813	100
Household size (no. persons)												
1	0	0	31	16	6	42	77	31	6	19	109	24
2	9	50	61	31	7	50	97	39	16	50	158	36
3	1	5	31	16	1	8	30	12	2	6	62	14
4+	8	45	75	37	0	0	44	18	8	25	117	26
Total	18	100	198	100	14	100	248	100	32	100	446	100

Education and income were not solicited in the survey, but the 1986 Census suggests that average incomes in the RM are above the average for the area. The occupation breakdown for the survey indicates that farmers and retirees dominate the RM sample, and retirees are most common in Hartney (Table 9). Retired persons, farmers and professional people each constituted more than 20 percent of the total survey respondents.

Table 9. Occupations of survey respondents in the RM of Cameron and the Town of Hartney

Occupation	RM Cameron		Town of Hartney		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Farmer	7	39	1	8	8	27
Housewife	2	11	2	16	4	13
Professional	3	17	3	25	6	20
Student	1	6	1	8	2	7
Retired	5	27	5	43	10	33
Total	18	100	12	100	30	100

The Demand for Library Services

An enquiry about establishing a library was made by the RM of Cameron to the Ministry in March 1983. The reply suggested that amalgamation with either Bren Del Win, Glenwood-Souris or Western (Figure 2) would be most advisable. Hartney currently has a Library Services Branch travelling library located in the Municipal Office. When the town enquired about establishing a permanent library in 1977, they were encouraged to join the Boissevain system. No further correspondence has been received by either the Municipality or the Town.

Individuals who do not have access to a library in their own community have a number of alternatives. Non-resident membership is one option. As part of this survey libraries in the area were contacted to determine how many residents of Cameron and Hartney are paying members of other libraries (Figures 4 and 5). Complete figures were not available for the RM, but it appears that there are some Cameron residents with mailing addresses in Souris among its 25 non-resident borrowers, and Bren Del Win also has some Cameron members (Figure 4). The Brandon library reported two memberships from Hartney. Unfortunately, information from the Souris library did not allow specific definition of origin of non-resident members.

Among the Cameron respondents to the questionnaire, only two had library memberships (one at Bren Del Win and one at Souris), but both owned land in neighbouring RMs so that they did not have to pay non-resident fees. Only one of 12 respondents in Hartney held a membership at another library (Souris). Combined, therefore, 3 of 26 respondents had joined a library system. These results suggest a moderate demand for library services (12 percent).

A general misunderstanding of the service provided at Hartney was evident. Two Cameron respondents said they had memberships there and five of those without a membership gave Hartney as the closest public library (36 percent). Among Hartney respondents the local travelling library was listed by eight persons (73 percent) as the nearest public library. Only three Hartney respondents correctly identified Souris as the closest public library. Answers from Cameron included Souris (n=3), Deloraine (n=3), Napinka (n=1), Melita (n=1), and Brandon (n=1) (Figure 1).

An alternative to using a neighbouring library is use of the Provincial book by mail service. Ten Cameron respondents were aware of the mail service and five had used it. Three Hartney residents knew about the service and one had used it. Combined, 24 percent of area respondents had used the mail service. This greatly exceeds the 2.9 percent use rate for all Manitobans who do not have access to a permanent library (Public Library, 1989).

Another alternative provided by the Province is the Travelling Library Program, an outlet of which is located in Hartney. Fifteen of the 18 Cameron respondents and 8 of the 12 Hartney interviewees were aware of the Hartney service although some were clearly confused about how it operated.

A final alternative is to have a private book collection or to obtain them from a source other than a public library or Provincial service. When asked about this alternative, purchasing and borrowing books was most frequently mentioned, and ordering by mail from a book club was common (Table 10).

Table 10. Private options used by residents of the RM of Cameron and the Town of Hartney to obtain reading materials

Option	Cameron		Hartney		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Buy or borrow	11	61	5	46	16	56
Trade	0	0	3	27	3	10
University/school library	0	0	1	9	1	3
Bookclub/mail	7	39	2	18	9	31
Total	18	100	11	100	29	100

When asked where a library should be located to encourage use, Hartney was chosen by 5 residents of the Town, but the other seven respondents said they would not use a library even if it was in Hartney. Hartney was listed by 10 Cameron residents. One person preferred Napinka. While Hartney was the clear location of preference for most respondents, those who live close to the boundaries of the RM would prefer access to neighbouring libraries, particularly Bren Del Win (Figure 2). The establishment of a new branch for this system could be considered.

Willingness to pay $7 per person extra on taxes in exchange for free library service engendered 10 positive and 8 negative responses in Cameron, and 7 positive and 5 negative responses in Hartney. Overall, therefore, 59 percent of those interviewed would be willing to pay for a library. The no's included the two respondents with land in other RMs that already belong to library systems, thus the positive response was surprisingly high. If 59 percent of households were to join the library this would represent a participation rate above that of existing libraries (Table 1).

Library Services Desired

Readership characteristics of residents of Cameron and Hartney were explored in the questionnaire. Cameron residents most often read no books or one book per month (combined 56 percent), but two or three books are common (Table 11). If all of these books were borrowed from a library, this would generate a use of 540 books per month and a circulation/capita per year of 10.6 books (above the average for existing libraries). Similar patterns were evident for Hartney and combined data. Hartney residents would borrow 360 books per month, for an average circulation rate of 8.3 books per capita per year.

Rural residents would use the library more frequently than Hartney residents (Table 12). About 50 users per week, borrowing 5 books each, would result in Cameron, and 30 users borrowing 12 books each in Hartney. A library in Hartney, therefore, would serve about 80 people per week and distribute about 900 books per month.

Only 18 persons responded to a question about preferred hours of operation for a library in Hartney. Most (44 percent) preferred all day operation, but an additional 22 percent preferred evening access. This pattern was consistent for the town and rural areas. Afternoon and evening operation would best serve the people of the district (Table 12).

Most readers in Cameron preferred fiction, most in Hartney non-fiction, and about one-fourth of both surveys read magazines. When combined, a balanced library selection would best serve the population of the area (Table 12).

Balanced special services also were requested by respondents (Table 12). The most frequently requested service in both jurisdictions was for an information centre that distributes government literature. A number of respondents noted that there was no agriculture representative office nearby, which is the usual alternative source of such material. Authors and speakers, large print books, sound recordings and children's books were listed commonly. The total number of responses indicates that most people desired two or three types of services. The lack of interest in second language books reflects the fact that 97 percent of Cameron residents and 89 percent of Hartney residents are anglophones. In 1986, there were only 35 children between 5 and 9 years of age in Cameron and 40 in Hartney. In contrast, 60 persons in Cameron and 155 in Hartney were more than 65 years of age. The older age structure is reflected in the services desired.

In conclusion, support for a library among the population of Cameron would appear to be sufficient to warrant the council examining the question further. Hartney residents are less committed to the library, but are not necessarily against a library for others. The two jurisdictions combined could support a library.

Table 11. Number of books read per month by survey respondents and family members who are avid readers in the RM of Cameron and the Town of Hartney

Jurisdiction	No. books read/month	Respondents		Family		Total persons		Total books	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Cameron	0	5	28	0	0	5	21	0	0
	1	5	28	0	0	5	21	5	9
	2	3	16	2	33	5	21	10	19
	3	3	16	3	50	6	25	18	33
	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	5	1	6	0	0	1	4	5	9
	6+	1	6	1	17	2	8	16	30
	Total	18	100	6	100	24	100	54	100
Hartney	0	4	33	0	0	4	23	0	0
	1	3	25	1	20	4	23	4	11
	2	1	8	1	20	2	12	4	11
	3	2	17	2	40	4	23	12	33
	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	5	1	8	1	20	2	12	10	28
	6+	1	8	0	0	1	7	6	17
	Total	12	100	5	100	17	100	36	100
Combined areas	0	9	30	0	0	9	22	0	0
	1	8	27	1	9	9	22	9	10
	2	4	13	3	27	7	18	14	16
	3	5	17	5	46	10	24	30	33
	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	5	2	7	1	9	3	7	15	17
	6+	2	7	1	9	3	7	22	24
	Total	30	100	11	100	41	100	90	100

Table 12. Readership characteristics of respondents in the RM of Cameron and the Town of Hartney

Characteristic	Cameron No.	Cameron %	Hartney No.	Hartney %	Total No.	Total %
Freq. library use						
Weekly	2	11	2	17	4	13
Bi-weekly	4	22	1	8	5	17
Monthly	5	28	1	8	6	20
Occasionally	5	28	2	17	7	23
Never	2	11	6	50	8	27
Total	18	100	12	100	30	100
Preferred hours operation						
All day	6	44	2	50	8	44
Mornings	1	7	1	25	2	11
Afternoons	3	21			3	17
Evenings	3	21	1	25	4	22
Weekends	1	7			1	6
Total	14	100	4	100	18	100
Materials read[1]						
Fiction	8	44	3	21	11	34
Non-fiction	3	17	6	43	9	28
Magazines	3	17	3	21	6	19
Total no. respondents	18		14		32	
Special Services[1]						
Information centre[2]	14	78	6	43	20	67
Authors/speakers	10	56	5	36	15	50
Adult literacy program	1	6	2	14	3	10
Sound recordings	9	50	1	7	10	33
Children's books	8	44	1	7	9	30
Story time	5	28	1	7	6	20
Large print books	7	39	5	36	12	40
Second language books	1	6	2	14	3	10
Total no. respondents	18		14		30	

[1] Multiple answers allowed
[2] Distribution of government materials ,etc.

The Rural Municipality Of Sifton and the Town Of Oak Lake

Description of the Area

The Rural Municipality of Sifton is an area of 736 km^2 with an average population density of 1.1 persons/km^2 (Figure 1). The Trans-Canada Highway passes through the northern part of the RM and Highway 2 passes through the southern part. Secondary settlements of the RM are Griswold and Routledge on Highway 1, and Deleau on Highway 2. The hamlets of Findlay and Belleview have public schools. Algar, Ralston and Maon are CNR stops. The Town of Oak Lake is located on the Trans-Canada Highway approximately 20 km east of Virden and 36 km west of Brandon. The town is surrounded by the RM of Sifton and is in a north central location within it. The two municipalities share municipal offices. The nearest libraries are located at Souris, Reston and Virden. A portion of the RM extending from north to south to the east of the Town of Oak Lake and Oak Lake itself, and representing about 30 percent of the total area of the RM, is located beyond the Provincial objective of 25 km to the nearest library (Figure 3). The closest library to Oak Lake is at Virden. A small community library operates from the Legion Hall in Oak Lake.

The 1986 Census population of Sifton was 842, up 2.7 percent from 1981. The total number of adults was 550 with all listed as being Canadian citizens. The 1989 list of electors has 522 resident voters, suggesting that the municipal population has possibly declined slightly. The Census lists 275 households, and the electoral list 258. The 1986 Census population of Oak Lake was 399, up 8 percent from 1981. The total number of adults was 310, 15 of whom were not Canadian citizens. The 1989 list of electors lists 277 resident voters. Further, the Census lists 175 households, and the electoral list 170. The town population is too small to support a library, but a federation with the RM of Sifton would provide a population approximately the same as that of the smallest regional library in southwestern Manitoba (Table 1). Affiliation with the RM of Woodworth, which has no market town, also might be considered.

The Survey Population

The trend in Manitoba has been for Rural Municipalities and the urban units within their boundaries to share a library facility. Thus the study of the RM of Sifton was linked to a study of the Town of Oak Lake. Surveys were apportioned according to the relative populations of the two units. The Sifton survey consisted of 25 questionnaires, and that of Oak Lake had 17 respondents. Because people have to travel to use a library, it was decided that a spatial distribution of the questionnaires which reflected the spatial distribution of the population would be most representative. This was achieved by using the 1989 voters list which is a spatial list of the population (by polling station).

Resident households (persons with same last name at same address) were identified and, beginning at a random point, every tenth household was contacted. This represented 9.7 percent of all households in Sifton and 10 percent in Oak Lake. Six respondents in Sifton and six in Oak Lake said they had no interest and refused to participate further. Information is based on a total of 30 responses. Advanced age often was cited as reason for lack of interest. Although demographic characteristics may affect demand for libraries, the survey did not attempt to represent any specific characteristics. It is, therefore, important to comment briefly on them with respect to the 1986 Census data.

Although women make up only 46 percent of the adult population of Sifton, and 51 percent in Oak Lake, the survey respondents consisted of 14 females and 5 males in the RM and 10 females and one male in the town (Table 13). This may have provided a bias towards library users. Respondents were asked if there was a more avid reader in the house. Five of the females and one of the males in Sifton answered yes, and two females and one male answered yes in Oak Lake suggesting that sex did not provide a strong bias in the sample. Education and income were not solicited in the survey.

Table 13. Survey and Census comparison of age and sex of adults, and household size for the RM of Sifton and the Town of Oak Lake

Characteristic	RM Sifton				Town of Oak Lake				Total			
	Survey		Census		Survey		Census		Survey		Census	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Sex												
Female	14	74	253	46	10	91	158	51	24	80	411	48
Male	5	26	297	54	1	9	152	49	6	20	449	52
Total	19	100	550	100	11	100	310	100	30	100	860	100
Age												
18 - 24 yrs	1	5	33	6	1	9	65	21	2	7	98	11
25 - 44 yrs	9	50	247	45	4	41	133	43	13	43	380	44
45+ yrs	9	45	270	49	6	50	112	36	15	50	382	45
Total	19	100	550	100	11	100	310	100	30	100	860	100
Household size (no. persons)												
1	0	0	46	18	1	9	54	32	1	3	100	23
2	10	53	75	29	6	55	68	40	16	53	143	34
3	3	16	36	14	2	18	24	14	5	17	60	14
4+	6	31	101	39	2	18	24	14	8	27	125	29
Total	19	100	258	100	11	100	170	100	30	100	428	100

The Census data on age distribution and that from the survey indicates that the survey slightly over represented the 25 - 44 years age group in Sifton (Table 13). In Oak Lake, the respondents deviated from the Census in that younger persons were under-represented. When combined the age groupings represent the Census population.

Forty-two percent of survey households in Sifton had children between the ages of 5 and 18 years. This over-represents the Census figure of 28 percent. In Oak Lake, 27 percent of surveyed households had school-aged children while the Census value was 14 percent. Single person households were under-represented which could compensate for potential age bias, and may result in a reduction of mobility in library users.

Farmers dominated the occupations of Sifton respondents, and retired persons were most common in Oak Lake (Table 14). When combined, the 30 respondents in the area were evenly distributed among farmers, housewives, professionals and retired person.

Table 14. Occupations of survey respondents in the RM of Sifton and the Town of Oak Lake

Occupation	RM Sifton		Oak Lake		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Farmer	8	42	1	9	9	30
Housewife	3	15	3	27	6	20
Professional	4	21	3	27	7	23
Retired	2	11	4	37	6	20
Other	2	11			2	7
Total	19	100	11	100	30	100

The Demand for Library Services

Individuals who do not have access to a library in their own community have a number of alternatives. As part of this survey the libraries in the area were contacted to determine how many residents of Sifton are paying members of other libraries (Figures 4 and 5). Brandon Library reported three residents of Griswold as members. None of the closer libraries reported non-resident members from Sifton although it is possible that RM residents with a Souris postal address are among the members there. Virden and Reston have no non-resident members from Sifton-Oak Lake. Six Oak Lake residents hold membership in the Brandon Library. These results reflect ties to Brandon for shopping and employment and are above the provincial average for non-resident memberships (Public Library, 1989).

Eleven respondents in Sifton and eight in Oak Lake did not belong to a library. Two persons in Oak Lake considered themselves members of a small rotating book-lending service operating from the Canadian Legion in Oak Lake. Two RM residents and one town person belonged to the Brandon Library (Western Regional), and three Sifton residents belonged to the Souris library and three to the Virden library. The Virden members had property in the neighbouring RM providing free membership.

Of those not using a library, all but two (who listed Brandon) knew where the closest library was located. Responses included Souris (n=1), Virden (n=6) and Reston (n=2). Three Oak Lake respondents listed Brandon (an incorrect answer) and 7 listed Virden. Overall, therefore, most people were aware of the location of the nearest library.

An alternative to a neighbouring library is use of the Provincial book by mail service. Among survey respondents in Sifton, six were aware of the service and one had used it. Five Oak Lake respondents were aware of the mail service and three had used it. This figure projects to 5 percent of the Sifton population and 27 percent of the Oak Lake population.

Another alternative provided by the Province is the Travelling Library Program. The closest such library is in Hartney, and four Sifton residents were aware of the Hartney alternative, but no one in Oak Lake had knowledge of the Hartney situation. Some people in Oak Lake were familiar with the local Legion service and some were not.

A final alternative is to have a private book collection or to obtain reading materials from a source other than a public library or Provincial service. Overall respondents listed buying or borrowing books as the most common option (54 percent), but trading was also common (Table 15). Use of other options included book club membership by some Sifton residents.

Table 15. Private options used by residents of the RM of Sifton and the Town of Oak Lake to obtain reading materials

Option	Sifton		Oak Lake		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Buy or borrow	8	53	5	56	13	54
Trade	3	20	2	22	5	22
University/school library	1	7	2	22	3	12
Book club/mail	3	20	0	0	3	12
Total	15	100	9	100	24	100

When asked if they would use a library if it was in the nearest town, 7 Sifton residents and 10 Oak Lake residents said yes if it was in Oak Lake (Table 16). Three Sifton respondents preferred a library association with Virden, three with Souris and two with Hartney. The Oak Lake location, therefore, is preferred by 66 percent of respondents, which suggests strong support in this location. An Oak Lake branch of the Virden or Souris libraries would increase resident sponsorship by an additional 10 percent. The dispersed nature of the Sifton population enhances the branch option. Three residents of the RM and one from the town said they would not use a library no matter where it was located.

Table 16. Preferred location for a library to serve the RM of Sifton and the Town of Oak Lake

Preferred location	RM Sifton		Oak Lake		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Souris	3	19	0	0	3	11
Oak Lake	7	44	10	100	17	66
Virden	3	19	0	0	3	11
Hartney	2	12	0	0	2	8
Griswold	1	6	0	0	1	4
Total	16	100	10	100	26	100

Willingness to pay $7 per person extra on taxes in exchange for free library service received 9 positive and 10 negative responses in Sifton, and 8 positive and 3 negative responses in Oak Lake. Both response rates are favourable, and the combined responses are 57 percent positive. This reflects a strong desire for local library service.

Library Services Desired

The readership habits of respondents varied between rural and town residents (Table 17). Sifton residents are more likely to read none or one book per month than are Oak Lake respondents. Similarly, town residents would use the library far more frequently than would rural residents. Adjusting the number of books read by the number of respondents and household avid readers in each group, rural use would result in 540 books circulated per month, or 7.7 books per capita per year, and town residents would borrow 692 books per month, or 21 books per person per year. The town figure is three times the Provincial average, and the rural figure average for use at existing libraries (Table 1). Overall, about half of the area respondents would use the library weekly or bi-weekly and about half occasionally or never. The rates of borrowing, therefore, reflect some avid readers in Oak Lake.

Most rural and town respondents preferred access to a library all day, but afternoons and evenings received considerable response. It appears that afternoon hours would service day-use desires and evening use may provide access to an additional 25 percent of potential users. Weekend access is not essential in this area.

Overall, respondents in Sifton and Oak Lake preferred a mix of fiction, non-fiction and magazines. Town residents had a stronger demand for fiction, but balanced holdings would best serve the entire population (Table 18).

Of the eight special services that could be provided, area residents rated five between 13 and 20 percent of the time. The only infrequently mentioned services were adult literacy classes, storytime for children and second language books (Table 18). The total number of responses suggests that respondents listed an average of three services each. There are approximately as many children aged 5 - 9 years (n=65) as seniors aged 65+ years (n=70) in Sifton, but only 30 young children and 125 seniors live in Oak Lake. The diverse age structure is reflected in desired services.

In conclusion, while the area contains a few avid library users who are prepared to travel to the nearest existing library, results suggest that the Sifton population does not include a high percentage of avid readers and may not support a library even if one was opened at Oak Lake or Hartney. This is strongly countered by positive support for a library by Oak Lake residents. These divergent views may create problems for establishment of a library, but overall demand is sufficient to warrant services, and a branch library affiliated probably with Virden, but possibly with Souris, Hartney (if established) or Brandon may best serve the needs of area residents.

Table 17. Number of books read per month by survey respondents and family members who are avid readers in the RM of Sifton and the Town of Oak Lake

Jurisdiction	No. books read/month	Respondents		Family		Total persons		Total books	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Sifton	0	7	37	0	0	7	28	0	0
	1	4	21	0	0	4	16	4	7
	2	3	16	2	33	5	20	10	19
	3	3	16	1	17	4	16	12	22
	4	0	0	1	17	1	4	4	7
	5	1	5	0	0	1	4	5	9
	6+	1	5	2	33	3	12	19	36
	Total	19	100	6	100	25	100	54	100
Oak Lake	0	3	28	0	0	3	22	0	0
	1	0	0	1	33	1	7	1	2
	2	4	36	0	0	4	28	8	18
	3	1	9	1	33	2	14	6	13
	4	1	9	0	0	1	7	4	9
	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	6+	2	18	1	33	3	22	26	58
	Total	11	100	3	100	14	100	45	100
Combined areas	0	10	33	0	0	10	26	0	0
	1	4	13	1	0	5	13	5	5
	2	7	25	2	17	9	23	18	18
	3	4	13	2	25	6	15	18	18
	4	1	3	1	17	2	5	8	8
	5	1	3	0	8	1	3	5	5
	6+	3	10	3	33	6	15	45	46
	Total	30	100	9	100	39	100	99	100

Table 18. Readership characteristics of respondents in the RM of Sifton and the Town of Oak Lake

Characteristic	Sifton No.	Sifton %	Oak Lake No.	Oak Lake %	Total No.	Total %
Freq. library use						
Weekly	2	11	6	55	8	27
Bi-weekly	4	21	3	27	7	23
Monthly	2	11	0	0	2	7
Occasionally	5	26	1	9	6	20
Never	6	31	1	9	7	23
Total	19	100	11	100	30	100
Preferred hours operation						
All day	6	40	3	38	9	39
Afternoons	5	33	3	38	8	35
Evenings	3	20	2	24	5	22
Weekends	1	7	0	0	1	4
Total	15	100	8	100	23	100
Materials read[1]						
Fiction	11	58	7	64	18	60
Non-fiction	12	63	4	36	16	53
Magazines	10	53	3	27	13	43
Total no. respondents	19		11		30	
Special services[1]						
Information centre[2]	10	53	9	82	19	63
Authors/speakers	10	53	6	55	16	53
Adult literacy program	5	26	1	9	6	20
Sound recordings	6	32	7	64	13	43
Children's books	9	47	4	36	13	43
Storytime	5	26	2	18	7	23
Large print books	8	42	4	36	12	40
Second language books	5	26	4	36	9	30
Total no. respondents	19		11		30	

[1] Multiple answers allowed
[2] Distribution of government materials, etc.

The Rural Municipality Of Woodworth

Description of the Area

The Rural Municipality of Woodworth is an approximately square area of 800 km^2 with an average population density of 1.4 persons/km^2 (Figure 1). The settlements of the RM include Lenore, Kenton and Harding, all of which are on secondary highways. The RM has no major market town within its boundaries. The southeast corner of the RM is occupied by the Sioux Valley Indian Reserve which, because of its federal jurisdiction, was not included in the survey.

The closest libraries to the RM are located at Virden, Hamiota and Rivers. About 65 percent of the RM is within 25 km of Virden and about 30 percent is within 25 km of Hamiota. The northeastern corner is also within 25 km of Rivers. An area equal to about 12 percent of the RM, in the southeast corner is beyond the provincial target of 25 km from a library. The Sioux Valley Indian Reserve is also beyond the provincial target.

The 1986 Census population for Woodworth was 1,154, which is 100 persons smaller than the smallest regional library in the southwest part of the province (Table 1). The total number of adults was 808 and the total number of households was 390. All residents were Canadian citizens. The 1989 list of electors lists 740 resident voters and 373 households suggesting a slight population decline since the 1986 Census.

The Survey Population

Because people have to travel to use a library, it was decided that a spatial distribution of questionnaires to reflect the dispersed population was most appropriate. This was achieved by using the 1989 voters list which is a spatial list of the population by polling station. The total number of resident households (persons with same last name at same address) was calculated (n=373) and, beginning at a random point in the voters list, every tenth household was selected until a total of 30 questionnaires had been administered. This represents an eight percent sample. Six respondents said they had no interest in the topic and refused to participate. The results below are based on a sample of 24 households.

Although demographic characteristics may affect demand for libraries, the survey did not attempt to represent any specific characteristic. It is, therefore, important to comment briefly on them with respect to the 1986 Census data. Although women make up 46 percent of the population, the survey consisted of 16 females (67 percent) and 8 males (Table 19). This might bias the results in favour of library users. However, seven of the females and none of the males said that their spouse was a more avid reader than they were, suggesting minimal bias due to sex of respondent.

The Census data on age distribution for the study area, and that for the survey, shows that the survey over represented the 25-44 year olds, who tend to be the most avid readers. The total number of one and two person households and the total number of three or larger households approximates the Census data (Table 19). Families with children were underrepresented in the survey (33 percent) when compared with the Census (61 percent).

Education and income were not solicited in the survey. The occupation breakdown for the survey (Table 20) showed tradespeople and retired persons as the main groups contacted. Housewives, professionals and farmers were major secondary groups.

Table 19. Survey and Census comparison of age, sex of adults, and household size for the RM of Woodworth

Characteristic		Survey No.	Survey %	Census No.	Census %
Sex					
	Female	16	67	373	46
	Male	8	33	435	54
	Total	24	100	808	100
Age					
	18 - 24 yrs	0	0	88	11
	25 - 44 yrs	13	54	310	38
	45+ yrs	11	46	410	51
	Total	24	100	808	100
Household size (no. persons)					
	1	2	8	70	18
	2	11	46	120	31
	3	8	33	55	15
	4+	3	13	140	36
	Total	24	100	385	100

Table 20. Occupations of survey respondents in the RM of Woodworth

Occupation	No.	%
Farmer	3	13
Housewife	4	17
Professional	4	17
Student	1	4
Retired	5	23
Trades	6	26
Total	23	100

The Demand for Library Services

Individuals who do not have access to a public library in their own community have a number of alternatives. As part of this survey, libraries in the area were contacted to determine how many residents of Woodworth are paying members. Rivers reported one member from Kenton, Virden reported none and Brandon reported two from Kenton. No report was received from Hamiota. Eight respondents (33 percent) said that they had non- resident memberships in neighbouring libraries in Virden (n=4), Hamiota (n=2), Brandon (n=1) and Rivers (n=1). This is a high participation rate for this type of service. Among those not using a library, all but one was able to give the location of the closest library at Virden (n=7), or Hamiota (n=8) (Figures 4 and 5).

An alternative to membership in a neighbouring library is the provincial book by mail service. Twelve respondents said that they were aware of the service and five (21 percent) said they had used it. This again is a high rate of use in comparison to the province as a whole. The province also operates a rotating book service. In reply to this question two respondents mentioned the collection held at the Canadian Legion in Oak Lake.

A final alternative is to have a private book collection, or to obtain them from a source other than a public library or provincial service. Overall, respondents listed buying (63 percent) as the most common option. Other options included school libraries and trading books (Table 21).

Table 21. Private options used by residents of the RM of Woodworth to obtain reading materials (multiple answers possible)

Option	No.	%
Buy or borrow	12	63
Trade	3	16
University/school	3	16
Book club	1	5
Total	19	100

When asked if they would use a library if it was located in the nearest town, eight said yes if in Kenton, five if in Virden, three if in Oak Lake and one if in Harding. Seven respondents said they would not use a library. When asked where they would prefer the library to be located, Kenton (n=10, 56 percent), Oak Lake (n=3, 17 percent), and Virden (n=5, 27 percent) were the answers given. These responses suggest that a branch of the Virden library at Kenton would satisfy most respondents (83 percent).

Willingness to pay $7 per person extra on taxes in exchange for free library service received 13 positive votes and 11 negative. This 54 percent positive result is very good given that only 35 percent of the average municipality uses a library. It reflects a strong desire for a library, as do the usage figures above.

Library Services Desired

Rural residents in the RM Woodworth had widely divergent reading habits (Table 22). Approximately one-quarter of respondents read no books, and another quarter read more than six books per month. One, two, and three books per month constituted responses by most readers. Seven of the 24 respondents listed a more avid reader in the household. When total readership is derived, 31 people read a total of 103 books per month, or an average of three books per person. Based on these numbers, a library could generate a demand for 1661 books per month, and be used by 564 patrons.

Most people would use a library occasionally (38 percent) or weekly (29 percent) (Table 23). Only 3 respondents (12 percent) said that they would never use a library. With respect to access to the library, all day and evening hours were most frequently mentioned. It would appear that afternoons and evenings would service the day-use desires. There were no requests for weekend hours. Fiction and non-fiction materials were about equally represented as desired materials.

From a choice of eight special services which the library might offer, distribution of information brochures and author visits were most frequently requested. Five others received about equal requests. Only books in a second language were not desired (Table 23). Given that 96 percent of the population is anglophone, this is not surprising.

In conclusion, the area contains a significant number of potential library users, many of whom are prepared to travel to Virden or Hamiota to access a library. Provision of a branch library at Kenton would meet the needs of the portion of the population which currently lives beyond 25 km from either of these libraries and provide free access to a larger system.

Table 22. Number of books read per month by survey respondents and family members who are avid readers in the RM of Woodworth

Number books read/month	Respondent		Family		Total			
	No.	%	No.	%	No. persons	%	No. books	%
0	6	25	0	0	6	19	0	0
1	4	17	1	14	5	15	5	5
2	4	17	1	14	5	15	10	10
3	3	12	1	14	5	15	12	12
4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	1	4	1	14	2	7	10	10
6+	6	25	3	44	9	24	66	64
Total	24	100	7	100	31	100	103	100

Table 23. Readership characteristics of respondents in the RM of Woodworth

Characteristic	No.	%
Freq. library use		
Weekly	7	29
Bi-weekly	1	4
Monthly	4	17
Occasionally	9	38
Never	3	12
Total	24	100
Preferred hours operation		
All day	7	35
Afternoons	6	30
Evenings	7	35
Weekends	0	0
Total	20	100
Materials read[1]		
Fiction	14	58
Non-fiction	12	50
Magazines	3	13
Total no. respondents	24	
Special services[1]		
Information centre[2]	18	75
Authors/speakers	15	63
Adult literacy program	7	29
Sound recordings	8	33
Children's books	8	33
Storytime	7	29
Large print books	7	29
Second language books	1	8
Total no. respondents	24	

[1] Multiple answers allowed
[2] Distribution of government materials, etc.

The Rural Municipality Of Whitewater

Description of the Area

The RM of Whitewater is a rectangular area of 559 km^2 with an average population density of 1.5 persons/km^2 (Figure 1). Settlements of the RM include Elgin, Fairfax and Minto. The RM has no major market town within its boundaries.

The closest libraries to the RM are located at Souris and Boissevain (Figure 1). About 42 percent of the RM is within 25 km of Souris and about 40 percent is within 25 km of Boissevain. An area equal to about 12 percent of the RM, in the northeast corner, is beyond the provincial target of 25 km from a library (Figure 3).

The 1986 Census population for Whitewater was 828 persons, which is smaller than the smallest regional library in the southwest part of the province (Table 1). The total number of adults was 580, and the total number of households was 235. All but 18 residents were Canadian citizens. The 1989 list of electors contains 516 resident voters and 258 households.

The Survey Population

Because people have to travel to use a library, it was decided that a spatial distribution of questionnaires to reflect the dispersed population was most appropriate. This was achieved by using the 1989 voters list which is a spatial list of the population (by polling station). The total number of resident households (persons with same last name at same address) was calculated (n=258) and beginning at a random point in the voters list, every tenth household was selected until a total of 26 questionnaires had been administered. This represents a 10 percent sample. Six respondents said they had no interest in the topic and refused to participate. Two gave old age as the reason, and one gave membership in a Hutterite colony as the reason. Results, therefore, are based on a sample of 20 households.

Although demographic characteristics may affect demand for libraries, the survey did not attempt to represent any specific characteristic. It is, therefore, important to comment briefly on them with respect to the 1986 Census data. Although women make up 49 percent of the adult population, the survey consisted of 15 females (75 percent) and 5 males (Table 24). This might bias the results in favour of library users. However, six of the females and one of the males said that their spouse was a more avid reader than they were, suggesting minimal bias due to sex of respondent.

The Census data on age distribution for the study area and that for the survey shows that the survey over-represented the elderly and under-represented the young (Table 24). This should not affect library use greatly in that middle-aged people are the greatest users.

The survey also over-represented smaller families (Table 24). Four families (24 percent) had children, and this group was under-represented in the survey compared with the Census (31 percent). In total, 55 percent of Census families had one or two members in a household, while these categories constituted 70 percent of households surveyed.

Table 24. Survey and Census comparison of age, sex of adults and household size for the RM of Whitewater

Characteristic	Survey		Census	
	No.	%	No.	%
Sex				
Female	15	75	280	49
Male	5	25	290	51
Total	20	100	570	100
Age				
18 - 24 yrs	1	5	70	12
25 - 44 yrs	6	30	225	40
45+ yrs	13	65	275	48
Total	20	100	570	100
Household size (no. persons)				
1	2	10	55	20
2	12	60	95	35
3	2	10	40	14
4+	4	20	85	31
Total	20	100	275	100

Education and income were not solicited in the survey. The occupation breakdown for the survey (Table 25) showed nearly equal representation from five occupations. Farmers, however, constituted the most frequently surveyed group.

Table 25. Occupations of survey respondents in the RM of Whitewater

Occupation	No.	%
Farmer	7	35
Housewife	3	15
Professional	3	15
Student	2	10
Retired	2	10
Trades	3	15
Total	20	100

The Demand for Library Services

Individuals who do not have access to a public library in their own community have a number of alternatives. Non-resident membership in a neighbouring municipality is one option (Figures 4 and 5). Boissevain reported that most of its 25 non-resident family memberships come from the RM of Whitewater, including the small schools along Highway 23. Souris could not identify the number of its 25 non-resident members from the RM (Figure 4). Brandon reported one member from Elgin, one from Fairfax, and two from Minto. Five respondents (25 percent) said that they had non-resident memberships in neighbouring libraries (Souris, n=4 and Boissevain, n=1). One respondent said his wife had a membership in Brandon. This is a high participation rate for this type of service, but the distances are relatively short. Among those not using a library, 12 knew where the nearest library was (Boissevain (n=8), Souris (n=4)), and 3 did not (Deloraine, Hartney and Brandon were given as incorrect answers).

An alternative to a neighbouring library is the provincial book by mail service. Seven respondents said that they were aware of the service and two (10 percent) said they had used it. This is a high usership rate in comparison to the province as a whole, but sample size is small. The province also operates a rotating book service. In reply to this question, no one said they knew about it although Hartney (the nearest such service) was given as the closest library by one respondent.

A final alternative is to have a private book collection or to obtain them from a source other than a public library or provincial service. Overall, respondents listed buying and borrowing (62 percent) as the most common option. Other options included trading (19 percent) and purchase by mail (19 percent) (Table 26).

Table 26. Private options used by residents of the RM of Whitewater to obtain reading materials

Option	No.	%
Buy or borrow	10	62
Trade	3	19
Book club	3	19
Total	16	100

When asked if they would use a library if it were located in the nearest town, 10 said yes (4 if in Minto, 3 if in Souris, and 3 if in Elgin). Ten respondents said they would not use a library even if in the nearest town.

When asked where they would prefer the library to be located, Souris (n=5), Minto (n=5), Elgin (n=1), and Hartney (n=1) were answers given. These responses suggest that 25 percent are happy with the current access to Souris, but a similar number would like to see a library in Minto.

Willingness to pay $7 per person extra on taxes in exchange for free library service received 4 positive responses and 16 negative responses. Two respondents pointed out that they could have non-resident family memberships in Souris for only $5, so why should they pay more to access the same library "free". These results suggest little support for a local library in the RM of Whitewater.

Library Services Desired

Readership questions showed that 55 percent of respondents read one to three books per month, 5 percent read more than six books per month and 35 percent did not read on a regular basis (Table 27). When more avid readers in the family were added, the percentage of non-readers decreased, and those reading four or more books per month constituted 22 percent of total readers. Based on these estimates, a library could have a demand for 819 books per month borrowed by 250 patrons and an average of three books each.

Table 27. Number of books read per month by survey respondents and family members who are avid readers in the RM of Whitewater

Number books read/month	Respondent		Family		Total			
	No.	%	No.	%	No. persons	%	No. books	%
0	7	35	0	0	7	26	0	0
1	4	20	0	0	4	15	4	7
2	5	25	2	29	7	26	14	24
3	2	10	1	14	3	11	9	15
4	1	5	0	0	1	4	4	7
5	0	0	2	29	2	7	10	17
6+	1	5	2	29	3	11	18	30
Total	20	100	7	100	27	100	59	100

Most respondents would use a library once a month or occasionally (Table 28). Thirty percent said they would not use a library. All day and afternoon hours were most frequently mentioned as favoured access times. It would appear that afternoons and evenings would service the day-use desires and accommodate evening users. There were no requests for weekend hours (Table 28).

The readership habits of respondents showed a preference for non-fiction, but magazines and fiction also were frequently mentioned. A library in this region, therefore, should have a balanced collection (Table 28).

From a choice of eight special services which the library might offer, distribution of information brochures and author visits were most frequently requested. Four others received about equal requests. Sound recordings and books in a second language were not desired. Given that 85 percent of the population is anglophone, with most of the remainder German speaking Hutterites, this is not surprising.

In conclusion, the area contains a significant number of people who have little interest in a library, or who are satisfied with existing opportunities. Provision of additional services in this RM would be difficult as the additional costs would not be supported by the ratepayers, and would supply a limited public.

Table 28. Readership characteristics of respondents in the RM of Whitewater

Characteristic	No.	%
Freq. library use		
Weekly	2	10
Bi-weekly	1	5
Monthly	7	35
Occasionally	4	20
Never	6	30
Total	20	100
Preferred hours operation		
All day	3	30
Morning	2	20
Afternoons	3	30
Evenings	2	20
Weekends	0	0
Total	10	100
Materials read[1]		
Fiction	7	35
Non-fiction	11	55
Magazines	9	45
Total no. respondents	20	
Special services		
Information centre[2]	11	55
Authors/speakers	8	40
Adult literacy program	4	20
Sound recordings	2	10
Children's books	6	30
Storytime	4	20
Large print books	1	5
Second language books	1	5
Total no. respondents	20	

[1] Multiple answers allowed
[2] Distribution of government materials, etc.

The Rural Municipality Of North Norfolk And The Village Of MacGregor

Description of the Area

The RM of North Norfolk is a rectangular area of 1117 km^2 with an average population density of 2.8 persons/km^2 (Figure 1). The main transportation routes are the Trans-Canada Highway between Portage la Prairie and Carberry and Highway 34 between Gladstone and Holland. The communities of the RM include Austin, Sydney, Bagot and Rossendale. The incorporated Village of MacGregor is located on the Trans-Canada Highway 29 km west of Portage la Prairie and slightly northeast of the centre of the RM.

The closest libraries to the RM are located at Westbourne, Gladstone, Portage la Prairie, Holland and Carberry. Allowing circular area overlap, about 35 percent of the RM is within 25 km of Westbourne, 15 percent is within 25 km of Gladstone, 11 percent is within 25 km of Portage la Prairie, 10 percent within 25 km of Carberry and 5 percent within 25 km of Holland. An area equal to about 40 percent of the RM is beyond the 25 km target set by the province (Figure 3). The only library within 25 km of MacGregor is at Westbourne.

The 1986 population for North Norfolk was 3,090, which is well above that required to support a library. MacGregor's population of 854 is smaller than that of the smallest regional library in the southwest part of the province (Table 1). The Census lists 1,963 adults in the RM and 639 in the Village. The total number of households in the RM was 900 and that in MacGregor was 350. The 1989 list of electors lists 2,224 resident voters and 1,056 households in North Norfolk and 610 resident voters and 366 households in MacGregor. This suggests population increases in both municipalities since the 1986 Census.

The Survey Population

Because people have to travel to use a library, it was decided that a spatial distribution of questionnaires to reflect the population pattern was most appropriate. This was achieved by using the 1989 voters list which is a spatial list of the population (by polling station). The total number of resident households (persons with same last name at same address) was calculated and beginning at a random point in the voters list every tenth household was selected until a total of 50 questionnaires had been administered in the RM and 36 in the Village. Thirteen residents of MacGregor refused to participate; seven of these gave advanced age as their reason. Seven respondents in North Norfolk refused to participate, one gave advanced age as the reason, and one gave language as the reason. The results below, therefore, are based on a sample of 43 households in North Norfolk and 22 households in MacGregor.

Although demographic characteristics may affect demand for libraries, the survey did not attempt to represent any specific characteristic. It is, therefore, important to comment briefly on them with respect to the 1986 Census data to derive a perspective on the sample. The 1986 Census shows 46 percent of the population of MacGregor and 51 percent of the population of North Norfolk as male (Table 29). Males were under-represented in the survey (36 percent of respondents in MacGregor and 42 percent in North Norfolk). This could result in slight over-representation of library demand, as females use libraries more than males do. However, as part of the survey, respondents were asked if there was a more avid reader in the home. In North Norfolk eight males and eight females said yes. In MacGregor four males and five females said yes. This suggests minimal bias due to sex of respondent.

Table 29. Survey and Census comparison of age and sex of adults, and household size for the RM of North Norfolk and the Village of MacGregor

Characteristic	RM North Norfolk				Village of MacGregor				Total			
	Survey		Census		Survey		Census		Survey		Census	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Sex												
Female	25	58	954	49	14	64	344	54	39	60	1298	50
Male	18	42	1009	51	8	36	295	46	26	40	1304	50
Total	43	100	1963	100	22	100	639	100	65	100	2602	100
Age												
18 - 24 yrs	2	5	273	14	1	5	64	10	3	5	337	13
25 - 44 yrs	15	35	785	40	8	36	195	30	23	35	980	38
45+ yrs	26	60	905	46	13	59	380	60	39	60	1285	49
Total	43	100	1963	100	22	100	639	100	65	100	2602	100
Household size (no. persons)												
1	4	9	140	15	3	14	100	29	7	11	240	19
2	18	42	250	28	10	45	135	38	28	43	385	31
3	9	21	160	18	1	5	45	13	10	15	205	16
4+	12	28	350	39	8	36	70	20	20	31	420	34
Total	43	100	900	100	22	100	350	100	65	100	1250	100

The 1986 Census data on age distribution for the study area and that for the survey shows that the survey of North Norfolk over-represented older adults and under-represented younger adults. This should not affect library demand estimates as the two offset and are low use groups. In MacGregor the survey slightly over-represents middle-aged people and under-represents young adults. This might increase estimated library demand because middle-aged persons are heavy users of libraries.

In MacGregor the number of two and four or more person households are over-represented, while in the RM the number of one and three person households are over-represented. The total sample, however, closely approximates the Census distribution of size of households.

Education and income were not solicited in the survey. The occupation breakdown for the survey (Table 30) shows that the MacGregor sample is primarily retired persons and professionals, while the RM sample is primarily farmers and housewives. The total sample has equal representation from farmers and housewives, with retired persons, tradespeople and professionals all represented. The occupation mix, therefore, is balanced in the area.

Table 30. Occupations of survey respondents in the RM of North Norfolk and the Village of MacGregor

Occupation	Village of MacGregor		RM of Norfolk		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Farmer	2	9	14	33	16	24
Housewife	4	18	12	28	16	24
Professional	5	23	4	9	9	14
Retired	7	32	6	14	13	20
Trades	4	18	6	14	10	15
Student	0	0	1	2	1	3
Total	22	100	43	100	65	100

The Demand for Library Services

Individuals who do not have access to a public library in their own community have a number of alternatives. Non-resident membership in an existing library system is one option (Figures 4 and 5). Four respondents (18 percent) from MacGregor reported non-resident memberships in Portage la Prairie, and eight respondents (19 percent) from North Norfolk reported non-resident memberships (Portage la Prairie, n=7 and Gladstone, n=1). Among MacGregor respondents not using a library, 12 thought that Portage la Prairie was the nearest library and two responded with Carberry. These wrong answers clearly reflect the flow of shopping and employment travel towards Portage la Prairie. Responses from the RM reflected a similar bias, with 30 respondents (86 percent) listing Portage la Prairie. The other responses were Carberry (n=2), Westbourne (n=1) and no reply (n=2).

An alternative to a neighbouring library is the provincial book by mail service. Thirteen MacGregor respondents said that they were aware of the service and eight (36 percent) said they had used it. Twenty North Norfolk respondents said they were aware of the mail service and 10 (23 percent) said they had used it. These are high participation rates for both areas.

The province also operates a rotating book service. In reply to awareness of this option, eight MacGregor respondents mentioned that a service had existed in the Village but was now closed. In the RM, three respondents mentioned MacGregor and three mentioned a service in Austin.

A final alternative is to have a private book collection or to obtain them from a source other than a public library or provincial service. Overall, respondents listed buying (53 percent) as the most common option. Trading books was second most frequently mentioned (Table 31).

Table 31. Private options used by residents of the RM of North Norfolk and the Village of MacGregor to obtain reading materials

Option	North Norfolk		MacGregor		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Buy or borrow	15	47	12	63	27	53
Trade	10	31	3	16	13	25
School library	4	13	2	10	6	12
Book club	3	9	2	10	5	10
Total	32	100	19	100	51	100

When asked if they would use a library if it was located in MacGregor, 15 respondents from the Village said yes. MacGregor was also the most popular location given by RM residents, although Austin was commonly mentioned (Table 32). When data from both jurisdictions are combined, MacGregor is clearly the preferred location.

Table 32. Preferred location for a library to serve the RM of North Norfolk and the Village of MacGregor

Preferred location	North Norfolk		Village of MacGregor		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
MacGregor	23	58	15	100	38	69
Austin	12	30	0	0	12	22
Portage	5	12	0	0	5	9
Total	40	100	15	100	55	100

Willingness to pay $7 per person extra on taxes in exchange for free library service received 14 positive responses in MacGregor (64 percent) and 22 positive responses in North Norfolk (51 percent). This suggests strong support for a library in both the RM and the town.

Library Services Desired

In MacGregor 59 percent of respondents read one to three books per month, 5 percent read more than six books and 23 percent are not frequent readers (Table 33). Combined with data for more avid readers in the household, this would project library use of 1127 books per month by 571 patrons borrowing 2 books each. The figures for North Norfolk show a similar pattern. Fifty-five percent read between one and three books, 12 percent read more than six books and 33 percent are not frequent readers. The demand on a library would be 2563 books per month by 833 patrons borrowing three books each. This suggests a large number of infrequent readers which is typical of older age groups, as in MacGregor, and farm populations as in North Norfolk. The two jurisdictions combined, however, could easily support a library.

Respondents in North Norfolk would visit a local library either monthly or occasionally (combined 60 percent), while estimated frequency of use by MacGregor respondents was evenly distributed among categories (Table 34). When data are combined about one-third of area residents would use a library once or twice a month, one-third occasionally, and one-fifth would never use a library.

Full day service was the most frequent access request, but afternoon and evening service probably would satisfy more people. Only two respondents requested weekend service (Table 34).

The readership habits of respondents showed no preference for fiction or non-fiction in North Norfolk respondents, but MacGregor residents showed a slight preference for fiction. Magazines were infrequently mentioned (Table 34).

From a list of eight special services which a library may offer, the provision of information was ranked first in both municipalities (Table 34). Adult literacy ranked second in MacGregor and sound recordings ranked second in North Norfolk. Four other options were requested by more than 20 percent of respondent in both municipalities. The lowest response was to second language books, and the second lowest to children's story time. This is understandable given that the population is primarily anglophone (with German being the predominant second language), and, in the case of MacGregor, over 25 percent of the population is over 65 years of age.

There appears to be adequate demand to support a regional library in MacGregor to serve these two municipalities. Affiliation with Portage la Prairie might be considered for those who wish broader access to library resources.

Table 33. Number of books read per month by survey respondents and family members who are avid readers in the RM of North Norfolk and the Village of MacGregor

Jurisdiction	Number books read/month	Respondent		Family		Total persons		Total books	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
North Norfolk	0	14	33	0	0	14	24	0	0
	1	12	28	1	6	13	22	13	9
	2	8	18	3	19	11	18	22	16
	3	4	9	2	12	6	10	18	13
	4	0	0	1	6	1	2	4	3
	5	0	0	3	19	3	6	15	11
	6+	5	12	6	38	11	18	66	48
	Total	43	100	16	100	59	100	138	100
MacGregor	0	5	23	0	0	5	16	0	0
	1	4	18	3	33	7	23	7	10
	2	6	27	0	0	6	19	12	17
	3	3	14	2	22	5	16	15	21
	4	2	9	3	33	5	16	20	28
	5	1	5	0	0	1	3	5	7
	6+	1	5	1	11	2	7	12	17
	Total	22	100	9	100	31	100	71	100
Combined areas	0	19	29	0	0	19	21	0	0
	1	16	24	4	16	20	22	20	10
	2	14	22	3	12	17	19	34	16
	3	7	11	4	16	11	12	33	16
	4	2	3	4	16	6	7	24	12
	5	1	2	3	12	4	4	20	10
	6+	6	9	7	28	13	15	78	36
	Total	65	100	25	100	90	100	209	100

Table 34. Readership characteristics of respondents in the RM of North Norfolk and the Village of MacGregor

Characteristic	RM North Norfolk		MacGregor		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Freq. library use						
Weekly	3	7	4	18	7	11
Bi-weekly	6	14	5	23	11	17
Monthly	6	14	5	23	11	17
Occasionally	20	46	3	13	23	35
Never	8	19	5	23	13	20
Total	43	100	22	100	65	100
Preferred hours operation						
All day	11	34	6	50	17	38
Morning	0	0	0	0	0	0
Afternoons	8	26	3	25	11	25
Evenings	12	37	2	17	14	32
Weekends	1	3	1	8	2	5
Total	32	100	12	100	44	100
Materials read[1]						
Fiction	19	45	13	54	32	49
Non-fiction	20	48	11	46	31	46
Magazines	3	7	0	0	3	5
Total no. respondents	42		24		65	
Special services[1]						
Information centre[2]	33	77	16	73	49	75
Authors/speakers	16	37	6	27	22	34
Adult literacy program	14	33	10	45	24	37
Sound recordings	18	42	6	27	24	37
Children's books	15	35	5	23	20	31
Storytime	6	14	3	14	9	14
Large print books	12	28	6	27	18	28
Second language books	2	5	1	5	3	5
Total no. respondents	43		22		65	

[1] Multiple answers allowed
[2] Distribution of government materials, etc.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The final sample of 216 respondents should be adequate to provide reliable data on a regional basis. Although an attempt was made to contact 10 percent of the residents of each jurisdiction, those who did not want to be involved in the survey had to be counted and reduced the number of responses to questions in some areas. Data are reported for the original 10 percent, and replacement was not instituted to offset denials. Knowing how many people were not interested in a library in an area is important to final discussion. Smaller sample sizes, however, require caution in interpretation. The villages of Hartney (n=14) and Oak Lake (n=11) were most problematic, but their data are useful when combined with those from the Rural Municipality in which they are located.

Studies indicate that females use library facilities more than males do (Jones and Beckman, 1985; Vavrek, 1990a, 1990b). In rural American, 7 out of 10 library users were women. A potential bias occurs in our data in that 147 (68 percent) females and 69 (32 percent) males comprise the sample. These numbers should be compared to the 3,323 females (49 percent) and 3,420 males (51 percent) that occur in the study jurisdictions (Census of Canada 1986, 1987). Although the exact amount of over-estimation is impossible to calculate, our additional question on the presence of a more avid reader in the household often suggested that potential bias based on sex was less than that indicated by percentage of respondents. A preponderance of females in the sample, however, would result in over-estimation of the need for and potential use of libraries. The disproportionate representation of women was approximately 20 percent, which should be the maximum possible over-estimation. The preponderance of women in the survey is believed to be the result of a greater likelihood of women being in the home when telephone calls were made during the day.

Young people and seniors typically do not read as much as persons between the ages of 25 and 55 years (Jones and Beckman, 1985; Vavrek 1990a and 1990b). Although the age groups defined herein could not be identical to all other studies, they are reasonably reflective of young adults, middle-aged persons, and older persons. The 216 respondents were representative of the age distribution in the regional population. Persons 18 - 24 yrs comprised 8 percent of the sample and 11 percent of the regional population, those aged 25 - 44 yrs comprised 36 percent of the survey and 39 percent of the population, and those greater than 44 yrs accounted for 56 percent of the survey and 50 percent of the population. The minor under-representation of young adults and over-representation of older adults may be offsetting in that both groups are less avid readers than the 25 - 44 yr adults. In rural America, the average age of both male (47 years) and female (44 years) library users was somewhat older than that in Manitoba.

More bias could occur in some local area surveys where ratios among age groups were more divergent. Readership could be under-estimated in Oakland-Wawanesa, Cameron-Hartney and Whitewater where only 29 - 31 percent of respondents were in the most frequent user category. Conversely, 54 percent of those surveyed in Woodworth were in the highest user category and may have resulted in over-estimation of need.

Representative household size was the most divergent of the socioeconomic variables. Single person households comprised 10 percent of our sample, but 20 percent of the regional population. Conversely, two-person households were over-represented in the survey (47 percent) as compared to the population (33 percent). Three person households diverged only by 5 percent between the survey (19 percent) and census (14 percent), but households with four or more persons comprised only 24 percent of the survey and 33 percent of the regional population. Ostensibly, single people and small families are more mobile which may increase library use in rural areas. Variations observed, therefore, may be offsetting in that one and two-person households, when combined are nearly equal in the survey and census data. Not accounted for in the interpretation, however, is the fact that many single or married elderly people live in rural areas, and age likely is more important than household size in determining mobility and library access.

In hindsight, our approach to estimating household readership could have been more accurately defined. If respondents were infrequent readers, we also collected information on more avid readers in the household. This would result in complete and accurate data for two-person households. If, however, the respondent was the most avid reader, we failed to collect data on the less avid reader in a two-person household. Readership, therefore, would be underestimated unless the alternate person did not read at all. In households with more than two members, our total readership estimates would always be under-estimates. Total readership, therefore, should be an underestimate of reality.

On the other hand, readership per person may be over-estimated for two-person households because avid readers were always included (as respondent or avid reader), but infrequent or non-readers were not necessarily included. Readership per person, therefore, may easily be over-estimated if avid readers varied greatly from others in reading habits. Similarly, readership per person would be over-estimated in larger households where all members were not considered.

A third factor, that of exercising private options to obtain reading materials, also has to be considered. When people respond to a survey on library use, they likely would report total reading demand as their projected use. For this to be fully realized, however, all respondents would have to stop buying, borrowing or trading reading materials. Since this is not likely to occur, our estimates are probably higher than what would actually be realized.

When potential readership estimation problems are considered, one probably arrives at an explanation for the fact that our use estimates for unserved areas usually were higher than those where libraries exist. No estimation can be totally accurate. We do, however, recommend refinement of estimation methods in future surveys. In this instance, comparative literature does not address the problems of estimation error, although methods we used are used elsewhere. We believe that total circulation may be somewhat underestimated by the survey, and circulation per person somewhat over-estimated. Lack of accounting for private options would offset underestimation of total circulation. It is impossible to say, however, that these potential errors offset each other equally. For this reason, readership projections that greatly exceed those for existing libraries in the region probably are over-estimations. They are probably a reflection of a level of demand, but should be interpreted in relationship to other factors such as willingness to pay and estimated number of users (as opposed to numbers of books).

Although occupation varied among areas, overall representation was evenly distributed in the regional totals. Farmers (24 percent), retired persons (22 percent), housewives (20 percent) and professional persons (20 percent) accounted for most respondents. Tradespersons (11 percent) and students (3 percent) were less commonly surveyed. The nature of occupational classifications make Census comparisons difficult, but the mix and balance of occupations encountered should be representative of the rural areas surveyed. Amongst female users of rural libraries in the United States, "homemakers" most frequently used libraries. Professionals were greatest users among men (Vavrek, 1990a).

The Demand for Library Services

In the absence of a local public library, rural citizens have a number of private options to obtain reading materials. Questions asked clearly defined the buying or borrowing of books and magazines as the most frequently exercised option (55 percent of respondents). Trading materials also is common (22 percent), while membership in a book club (mail, 14 percent) and using school libraries (9 percent) were less frequently used options. These options were fairly consistent among areas.

The extent to which residents of an unserviced area are prepared to go to obtain public library services is a measure of their desire for such services. Three options were considered in the survey: 1) non-resident membership in a neighbouring library, 2) use of the provincial book by mail service and 3) use of a provincial travelling library. The Province estimates that non-resident memberships are used by 2.9 percent of the total unserved population. Figures collected in the survey of southwestern Manitoba indicated an average of 20.3 percent of respondents holding non-resident memberships (Table 35). In some areas (e.g. Whitewater) the figures may relate to the relatively short distances to neighbouring libraries, but in other areas, (e.g. MacGregor), the distance to Portage la Prairie has not significantly reduced demand for this service. Hartney/Cameron had the lowest membership rates which probably reflects the presence of the travelling library in Hartney.

The Province estimates that its mail service also is used by 2.9 percent of the total unserviced population. Again, statistics gathered in the survey show a much higher user rate (average 18.6 percent). Again Hartney, Sifton and Whitewater, where alternative services are available, were low while more isolated municipalities such as MacGregor and Oak Lake were high (Table 35).

The third alternative is the provincial travelling library collections. In their report (Public Library, 1989), the Province admits that the quality of these collections has declined and the number of such services also has declined. Only 0.85 percent of the Province's unserved population use this service. The survey asked the respondents if they were aware of such a service rather than if they used it. The results show that awareness was high only in close proximity to such outlets, (e.g. Hartney/Cameron/Sifton and MacGregor/North Norfolk). Other communities seemed to be completely unaware of this option. The statistics in this section support the conclusion that there is a general interest in access to libraries in southwestern Manitoba (Table 35).

Table 35. Alternatives to local library service used by residents of southwestern Manitoba

Municipality	Non-Resident memberships (%)	Provincial book by mail (%)	Travelling libraries (%)
Oakland RM	22	11	11
Wawanesa V	17	17	0
Cameron RM	11	28	83
Hartney T	7	7	57
Whitewater RM	25	10	0
Sifton RM	31	6	25
Oak Lake T	20	27	0
Woodworth RM	33	21	0
N. Norfolk RM	19	23	7
MacGregor V	18	36	36
Average	20.3	18.6	21.9

The second measure of interest in a library was derived through two questions. First, "would you visit a library if it were in the nearest community to you?" and second, "would you be prepared to see an increase in your property taxes of $7 per person to give you free access to a library?" Statistics from the existing regional libraries in the southwest show an average membership of 44 percent of the population (Table 1). Figures in excess of this value may be considered expression of support for a library, including some residents who would probably use it infrequently, if at all.

In response to the question "would you use the library" the average positive response was 63 percent, with only one municipality below 44 percent (Table 36). In response to the tax increase question, seven of the ten municipalities had more than 44 percent of respondents say that they were prepared to pay this additional cost. In Whitewater it appears that the non-resident membership fee in Souris is lower than $7. In Sifton and Oakland the problem is deciding where to put the library as different parts of the RM are oriented towards different urban centres. Building a branch of an existing regional system may be the best options in these cases. These measures show a clear interest in library facilities in most municipalities.

Data from rural America suggest that 48 percent of all rural residents were not active library users. This is not greatly divergent from our results if non-respondents are added to non-using respondents. Most rural Americans were not willing to pay a per visit fee for use of a library, and those that would pay did not want to pay more than one dollar (Vavrek, 1990a). Library accessibility was considered a free public service in the United States.

Table 36. Desire to use and pay for a library in all survey jurisdictions

Municipality	Percent who would use	Percent willing to pay
Oakland	59	37
Wawanesa	72	78
Cameron	61	56
Hartney	42	50
Whitewater	60	20
Sifton	53	38
Oak Lake	91	47
Woodworth	70	57
N. Norfolk	53	51
MacGregor	68	64
Average	62.9	49.8

The third measure of desire for library services used in the survey was to ask respondents how many books they read each month and to convert this into a circulation per capita figure (Table 37). The average circulation among the libraries of southwestern Manitoba is 7.4 books per capita per year (Manitoba, 1987). Figures for the unserviced areas surveyed were well above this (average 15.7), but estimation error could be high. Towns and villages were higher in use estimates than were rural municipalities. Of interest is the nearly identical borrowing rate of 7.0 books per year by library users in rural America (Vavrek, 1990a).

This section of the questionnaire also asked about interest in specific services in order to better define the nature of the collection held and any activities which might draw people into the library. The most desired service was for the library to act as an information centre for the distribution of materials relating to government programs and policies (Table 37). A number of respondents commented that the absence of an agricultural representative could be overcome in this way. Another popular service was visits by authors or other guest speakers. These two services suggest that a library could in part be a community meeting place. The lack of interest in children's story times (another community function) reflects the elderly composition of the population.

There was no significant difference between the demands for large print books (30 percent), children's books (32 percent) and sound recordings (34 percent). Adult literacy programs were wanted in some areas but not in others, with an overall placing of sixth most requested. The survey area was populated almost exclusively by anglophones with the largest minority group being German speakers. Interest in books in a second language was therefore, quite small.

The rural library review in the United States also indicated that a government information center was the most desired service. In order of importance, information about best sellers, national news, local news, education programs, health and medical services and decisions of local governments were described as daily informational needs. Libraries, however, were viewed as most important in providing reference books, best sellers, how-to-do-it sources, hobby and craft books, education programs and national news (Vavrek, 1990a). The higher ranking of best-sellers and general reference may reduce the goverment information service function in ranking, but many information services are included among listings. Rural Manitobans, therefore, may be somewhat more in need of government information, but the services desired by rural people are not widely divergent between nations.

Table 37. Readership estimates and library services desired for all survey jurisdictions

Municipality	Percent interested in							
	Information centre	Author visits	Sound recordings	Children's books	Large print	Adult Literacy	Story time	Second language
Oakland	56	33	30	26	15	30	19	4
Wawanesa	83	50	44	39	33	39	33	6
Cameron	78	56	50	44	39	6	28	6
Hartney	50	42	8	8	42	17	8	17
Whitewater	55	40	10	30	5	20	20	5
Sifton	53	53	32	47	42	26	26	26
Oak Lake	82	55	64	36	36	9	18	36
Woodworth	75	63	33	33	29	29	29	8
N. Norfolk	77	37	42	35	28	33	14	5
MacGregor	73	27	27	23	27	45	14	5
Average	68.2	45.6	34.0	32.1	29.6	25.4	20.9	11.8

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Six Rural Municipalities and four towns within their boundaries were surveyed regarding demand for establishing public library services. Approximately 10 percent of resident households were surveyed, with a usable sample of 216 households. Demographic characteristics of the entire sample approximate Census data for the region, but small sub-samples for specific jurisdictions may be less representative. Considerable variation occurred in demand for, willingness to support, and format of potential library services.

Based on survey results, the following recommendations are made for provision of library services to the rural areas surveyed. The list is given in order of priority if economic restraint necessitates partial provision or phasing in of services.

1) The **Rural Municipality of North Norfolk and the Village of MacGregor** contain a combined population of 3,950, which is by far the most densely populated of the rural areas surveyed. Non-resident memberships in existing libraries and use of books by mail services are high in this area, and 64 percent of MacGregor residents and 51 percent of North Norfolk respondents said they were willing to pay for local library services. The area should be able to support a library, located in MacGregor, and operated either alone or as a branch of the Portage la Prairie system. The library should contain a balance of fiction and non-fiction resources, with clear provision of the government information function requested by 75 percent of respondents.

2) The **Rural Municipality of Oakland and the Village of Wawanesa** contain a combined population of 1,600. This population should be able to support a library, but municipal commitment (36 percent) is lower than that of the Village (78 percent) in regard to willingness to pay. Combined, however, 54 percent of area residents want a library in Wawanesa. A percentage of municipal resistance results from residents in the northwestern section of Oakland wanting privileges in the Western system centered in Brandon. This could be compromised by making a library in Wawanesa a branch of the Western system, which would accommodate 83 percent of the survey respondents. Fiction and

non-fiction should be balanced, and 67 percent of those surveyed requested a government information function within the library.

3) The **Rural Municipality of Cameron and the Town of Hartney** contain 1,150 people, a minimum to support a library. The present small book service in Hartney offsets some demand, but does not replace a library as 59 percent of all respondents were willing to pay for library services. Although the best location would be in Hartney, the diverse community affiliations of rural residents suggest that joining an existing system may better serve residents. Initial indications are that joining Bren Del Win may be the best option. A small library in Hartney should have balanced resources and provide a government information function.

4) Although the **Rural Municipality of Woodworth** does not contain a major market town, it does have the minimum population necessary to support a library (1,150 people). Many residents hold non-resident memberships in existing systems, showing an interest in library services; 54 percent said that they are willing to pay for a library in Kenton. If located in Kenton and affiliated with the Virden system, a local library would serve 83 percent of area residents. A balanced set of holdings was desired and 75 percent of respondents wanted a government information service.

5) The **Rural Municipality of Sifton and the Town of Oak Lake** contain 1,250 residents. Although 57 percent of all respondents said they would be willing to pay for library services, the rural residents were not predisposed to payment while Oak Lake residents were highly favourable. This may present a political problem to the establishment of a library. If established, however, residents want a balance between fiction and non-fiction resources. Affiliation with Virden or Souris would increase service by about 10 percent, but no combination served more than 70 percent of the population. A combination of shared services with the Rural Municipality of Woodworth may be feasible.

6) The population of 825 people in the **Rural Municipality of Whitewater** is not sufficient to support a library. Lacking a major market town, residents associate with a variety of surrounding communities. Library services in Boissevain, Souris, Hartney, Deloraine and Brandon all can be accessed, although distance will deter use. With 80 percent of respondents expressing no willingness to pay, no attempt should be made to establish a library in this jurisdiction. It may be worthwhile to conduct an information campaign to make interested residents aware of non-resident memberships in existing library systems.

Overall, there are two areas where new libraries are supported and would be immediately functional, three areas where demand varies and the population base is marginal unless combined with an existing system, and one area where a library is not feasible. In all cases, affiliations that would best serve local residents are suggested. Of great importance are the desire for balanced holdings and, more importantly, the provision of a government information service through libraries. Evidence suggests that this latter service should be placed in existing libraries, and may increase the use of libraries by rural residents throughout the Province. The demand for government information services suggests that some additional funding for libraries might come from other provincial ministries.

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